

THE
NECESSITY
OF

*The pouring out of the Spirit
from on High.*

UPON A
*Sinning Apostatizing People, set under
Judgment, in order to their merciful
Deliverance and Salvation.*

As it was Delivered in part, upon 21. 9. 1678. being a general
FAST throughout the united Colonies of N. E.

By WILLIAM ADAMS,
Pastor of the Church of Christ in Dedham.

Luk. 19. 41, 42. *And when he was come near, he beheld the City and
wept over it, saying, If thou hadst known even thou, at least in
this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they
are hid from thine eyes.*

Luk. 13. 35. *Behold, your house is left unto you desolate. And verily
I say unto you, Ye shal' not see me, until the time come when ye shall
say, Blessed is he that cometh in the Name of the Lord.*

Psal. 14. 7. *O that the Salvation of Israel were come out of Zion! when the
Lord bringeth back the Captivity of his People, Jacob
shall rejoice and Israel shall be glad.*

B O S T O N;

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blew Anchor. 1679.



To the Reader.

THat these Churches once flourished, with much spiritual prosperity, under a glorious dispensation of the Spirit and grace of God, by the saving administrations of his word and worship, and that with full demonstration of his special grace and favour ; we ought to commemorate, unto his praise and glory, and our own present shame and confusion. That now we are a people in extream danger of perishing, in our own sins, and under Gods Judgements, (unless God shall please in an extraordinary way, of Sovereign mercy to save us) is the most humbling consideration of our present sad condition. That all ordinary means (in that extraordinary way of improvement which God hath of late set us under) have been altogether ineffectual, unto a general and saving work of reformation ; makes it (at least) a fearful question, whether our degeneracy and apostacy may not prove Judicial, and so perpetual : a question which will not admit of a comfortable resolution, *until God shall pour out his Spirit from on high upon us.* That Sovereign promise of the donation, and effusion of the Spirit, and so of the dispensation of saving grace (as it hath been unto the Churches in all Ages, under their deepest defection,) So it is unto us the main stay of our faith, confidence, and comfort, and that which gives some present reviving, unto our languishing hope ; of the resurrection of Religion in these Churches. That God doth at present so far suspend the accomplishment of this promise, and so far withhold his Spirit and grace, it is, the just, yet most dreadful punishment of that most sinful abuse of it ; and general unprofitableness under the means of grace, and of that resisting his Spirit ; and rejecting his Son by unbelief and disobedience unto the Gospel which is found amongst us, and is sadly signal of the gradual cessation of the work of Conversion, and of the further execution of Gods wrath, both by external and spiritual plagues and Judgements. How much that blef-

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sed work doth already fail; the decaying and dying state of Religion, and of these Churches, doth evidence by woful instance and experience, there being little more left, then *a name to live, and those things which remain so ready to dye*; That so many sinners, do seem to be given up Judicially, unto the still growing, and prevailing sins of the times, which both in their nature and working are so utterly inconsistent with the progress of the work of Conversion, doth make the consideration of our present case much the more lamentable: especially considering that such sinners do remain under a secret, sovereign influence of Gods vindictive Justice; whence the word in the Ministry is become *a savour of death unto death in them that perish*. What remains then; but that we do most enixly endeavour; (in whatsoever we may, or can possibly) to approve our selves a people more hopeful; as to Conversion, Reformation, and Salvation; labouring practically, and savingly to understand, *even we at least in this our day the great things of our temporal, spiritual, and eternal peace, and welfare, least they should be hid from our eyes, because we know not this time of our visitation*. How is it then the most important concernment of all unconverted sinners, to take heed unto themselves, that they do not (as heretofore) hinder their own Conversion, by abusing and loosing their special day and seasons of grace, or by yielding up their Souls unto the power of sin and Satan, in those wayes of sinning, wherein their hearts will be hardened against the power and working of the word, and Spirit of God, unto positive unbelief and disobedience, unto the Gospel, against light, and so by giving up themselves unto deep secularity, in their unregeneracy, and unto spiritual Apostacy, from that common grace which they may have received and that past ordinary hope of recovery, *Heb. 6. 4. to 8*. But that sinners do redeem this present time unto a constant attendance upon the Ministry of the word; and a most diligent improvement of all means of grace, and operations of the Spirit, crying earnestly unto God, and waiting instantly upon him for the application of Christ, and salvation in a saving work of grace; and that under a sense of their extream necessity thereof, crying out as they *when prickt in their heart, Act 2. 31. what shall we do?* and as he, *Act. 16. 30. what must I do to be saved?* How severely also then are all such persons to be reprov'd and warn'd as the most dangerous, destructive Enemies, unto both the temporal and spiritual welfare, and prosperity of this people, and of these Churches, seeking the utter
ruine

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ruine and destruction both of the present, and succeeding generations; who make it their business, to hinder, obstruct, yea, utterly to destroy the work of Conversion, by upholding the sins of the times, opposing the duties of the times, corrupting the Souls of others, with error, hereby, libertinisme, and licentiousness, weakning the hearts and hands of those who labour in the work of Christ, for the salvation of Souls, by all means crossing and counter-working the whole work of Reformation: such do declare themselves to be *full of all mischief, Children of the Devil, and Enemies of all righteousness, Act. 13. 10.* & incurre that woe pronounced by our Saviour, *Math. 23. 19* Therefore all those who would approve themselves to be true friends to the work of Christ in the promotion of his Kingdome, the propagation of Religion, and the Salvation of Souls, ought to labour most intently in their several places, by all means with all their might to promote converting work, especially amongst the Rising Generations: Godly parents & Masters, heads of Families, by the constant exercise of the worship of God; in the life and power of it, by dayly instructions, admonitions, and all kind of religious education, by the right, and full improvement of Family government, training up Children and Servants *in the nurture and admonition of the Lord*, and this with sincere desire, and fervent prayer, for their Conversion. Churches by upholding a powerful dispensation of the word and all Ordinances, and a full supply of all provision in the house of God, especially a full and compleat Ministry, according to Christs appointment, that all means may be used and all duty performed toward the Children of the Covenant, and the rising Generations, which is necessary unto their Conversion, that they may not perish in their unregeneracy, through the neglect of that duty, and want of help to discharge it fully, which is, and is yet more likely to be the sad case of these Churches: *O let us pray the Lord of the harvest, to thrust forth Labourers into this great harvest.* The Ministry by *travailing in birth with Souls till Christ be formed in them*, and by the full and faithful discharge of duty as *Labourers together with God* in that work; wherein therefore they are to labour in a way of dependance upon Christ for assistance and success, and that both publicly and privately, in all wayes, and by all means, to gain and bring home Souls to him, as that which is the great end of their ministrations, wherein notwithstanding they are under great discouragement at present, from the diminution of that grace and blessing which might make their labours

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hours more effectual unto the work of conversion. The godly and religious Magistracy, by the improvement of civil Authority, in a way of full and direct subvency unto the work of Christ, the progress of which is the highest and most saving good and end of government, unto a Religious people; who are in the most happy and prosperous estate, when the Mountains bring peace, and the little hills Righteousness. Truly then it is high time for all orders, degrees & societies of men in New-England, by faith in prayer, to seek the Lord until he come and rain righteousness upon us, until he open Rivers in high places, and fountains in the midst of Valleys, and make the wilderness a Pool of Water; and the dry Land Springs of water, until he pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground, 'till he pour out his Spirit upon our Seed, and his blessing upon our Offspring, until he send us the great promise of his Spirit, in the accomplishment of it, by pouring out of his Spirit in a general, plentiful dispensation of converting grace upon us, our Children, Families, Churches, this whole people, both the standing and the rising Generations: Which would be a blessed Resurrection, and as life from the dead unto us. It is much for our encouragement that in this our perishing condition, God hath by his Spirit in the Ministry of many of his Servants, proposed this great promise; expressing his own gracious disposition to open and apply it, in the saving grace and blessing of it, and withal pressed us, from the consideration of inevitable destruction, without a full and perfect salvation by the application of it, and furnished us with all Arguments of faith, to labour and prevail with him in prayer for the obtainment of it: which also is the more solemnly observable, in that God hath providentially ordered the labours of divers of his Servants, in this same great and most necessary subject to be published at this time, as a Testimony unto this Generation, what their main work and duty is; whereby he hath shewed us what is good, and what it is that the Lord doth require at our hands. God grant that it may not be rejected, and so be left upon Record, as a Testimony against this Generation to condemn it, the more deeply, under the aggravated guilt of total & final Apostacy.

The Reverend and worthy Author of these Sermons, having been through the abundant grace of God sanctified, and separated from his youth, unto the Ministry, he hath had a more early call into that work, wherein he hath been more happy then most of his fellow Servants; and being himself cotaneous with, and amongst the choicest of the
first

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first ripe fruits of this young Generation; his Soul hath laboured, and doth labour, with the more fervency, of holy and sincere love to, and zeal for, the salvation of their Souls: modesty and humility being inherent in him as gifts, both of nature and grace, it would be too much an injury to him, to give his work deserved commendation: It shall therefore suffice to say, that the powerful and (we hope) saving impression which it had in the ministration of it, upon the hearts of the hearers, is a Testimony of divine approbation and commendation: the suitability and seasonableness of the Subject unto *this* time, and the necessity of *this* people, the copiousness, and (yet withal) conciseness of the method (it being exprestive of so much of the general message which God is sending unto his people, and of that which the Spirit is now speaking unto these Churches in so few Sermons) doth render it the more fit, and useful for the publick. The motion of the Spirit of God upon the hearts of those pious and judicious hearers, who have (we believe) been thereby moved with a godly zeal for the saving good of the Generation to desire, request, and undertake for the publication of it; doth promise it Patronage from Heaven. The special promised presence of our Lord Jesus with this his Servant, for his assistance in the Ministry of his word, as also in the whole course of his ministration, is a singular token, and pledge of his special grace and favour, unto that pretious Church in, and unto which he is called to minister. The Lord make them more and more thankful, profitable, and fruitful, and prosper his work with them, granting unto them more clear and full discoveries of his mind and will concerning their duty in order thereunto, *that they may stand more perfect and complant in all the will of God*; and be more fully replenished with his spiritual and gracious presence; *enriched* with all the gifts and graces of his Spirit, & settled (together with all our Churches) under the saving dispensation of the Covenant of grace, strengthened unto stedfast perseverance, in the faith, obedience, and order of the Gospel, unto the end. Which is the prayer of

Your Servants for Christ our Saviours sake.

Samuel Torrey.
Josiah Flint



R *Eader, The old Plea, The Authors absence from the Press, being
stil of force, occasions this further desire of thee, viz. that before
thou readeſt thou wilt with thy pen mend theſe following faults.*

*Pag. 4. l. 8. for, as in, read and. l. 34. r. Iſai. 29. p. 5. l. 12. biot out
once. p. 8. l. 4. r. enumeration. l. 5. r. when. p. 10. l. 27. for ſit, r. ſet.
p. 11. l. 16. r. fiercer. p. 15. l. 32. r. Scale. p. 16. l. 33. r. the things.
l. 37. r. an abundant. p. 17. l. 16. for to have, r. and have. p. 18. l. 13.
r. affect. p. 20. l. 18. r. light. p. 23. l. 3. after Eſtates r. or. l. 5. after ſe-
rious, r. as. p. 24. l. 2. r. ſet. p. 25. l. 13. r. thoſe. p. 28. l. 22. place the
comma after ſelves. p. 30. l. 14. for may, r. muſt.*

*Other leſſer miſtakes there are, as miſquotations in figures, miſpoint-
ings, eſpecially in interrogative points, which are ſometimes omitted, and
ſometimes where they ſhould not be, and miſpellings in ſome words where the
ſenſe is plain, all which a little candour in the Reader will eaſily mend.*



Isai. 32. 13---18.

- Ver. 13. *Upon the Land of my People shall come up thorns and briers, yea, upon all the houses of joy in the joyous City.*
- Ver. 14. *Because the Palaces shall be forsaken, the multitude of the City shall be left, the Forts and Towers shall be for dens for ever, a joy of wild Asses, a Pasture of Flocks;*
- Ver. 15. *Until the Spirit be poured upon us from on high, and the Wilderiness be a fruitful Field, and the fruitful Field be counted for a Forrest.*
- Ver. 16. *Then Judgement shall dwell in the Wilderiness, and Righteousness remain in the fruitful Field.*
- Ver. 17. *And the work of Righteousness shall be peace, and the Effect of Righteousness, quietness and assurance for ever.*
- Ver. 18. *And my People shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting places.*

IN the beginning of this Chapter there is a Prophecy of the righteous and prosperous reign of a *King*, whose Subjects shall live in a comfortable and happy condition under his government, things and persons shall be called by their right names, a wicked man shall be called a wicked man, a good man owned for a good man, and every one treated rightly, and all things managed righteously, every person and thing handled according to their true merits, *ver. 1, to 9.* And this *King* is by some taken to be *Hezekiah*. Engl. Annot. But by others *Christ*, under whose reign especially all these things are accomplished. *Jun. in loc.* Christ does indeed alwayes rule, but there is at some times a more eminent and powerful administration of his Kingdome, wherein there is a more visible and plenary fulfilling of the thing here spoken of, and to some such time may this Prophecy have respect.

In the latter part of the Chapter the Prophet discourseth of those troubles that were to come upon the Land of his People, before their establishment in and under the prosperity formerly described.

And 1. He begins with a solemn warning and Exhortation to all secure careless ones to be awakened by their misery coming, and to break off their evil courses, and to betake themselves to humiliation,

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lamentation

lamentation, and so to Reformation, if thereby they might prevent, or at least moderate the Judgement impending over them. Ver. 9, to 13. *Rise up ye Women that are at ease, hear my voice ye careless daughters, give ear unto my Speech: Many dayes and years shall ye be troubled, ye careless Women, &c. Tremble ye Women that are at ease, &c.* Would careless secure Men and Women be awakened by warnings given, much of their sorrow might be diverted. Had we sinful and foolish People in New-England been wise in season, and taken those solemn warnings have been given us. much of that sorrow and misery which we have felt, and do feel in War, sickness, and other shakings might have been escaped. 2. He declares (seeing they had not by Repentance diverted Gods Anger, but were secure) their settlement under a dispensation of Judgement, and the continuance and process of their miseries to a determined period, at which there should be a great turn and change of Gods dispensations towards them, ver. 13. to 19. read: 3. In the two last Verses, whether read by themselves, or joyned with the foregoing, he describes the blessedness and security both of their persons, and enjoyments, upon and for whom this change is wrought, however it fare with others: when sorrows come down upon others they shall be secured. The expressions here used being probably metaphorical. *Vide Sanctum in Pol. Synop.*

In the Text we have 1. A declaration of the settlement of this People under a dispensation of Judgement, and the process of Judgements and miseries upon them. How troubles & sorrows should come, grow upon & overspread them, ver. 13. 14. *Upon the Land of my People shall come up Thorns & Briars*] *Thorns & Bryars* may be here taken literally, & so the expression denotes the great devastation & depopulation should be made in the Land. They may also be taken metaphorically, as Ezek. 28 24. *There shall be no more a pricking Brier to the house of Israel, nor any grieving Thorn of all that are round about them.* So that by *Thorns and Briars coming up upon the Land*, we may understand pricking, grieving, pinching, and disquieting troubles falling upon the Inhabitants of the Land. *Upon all the houses of joy*] They are called *houses of joy*, because they were at present full of mirth and merriment in them, as misdoubting no trouble near, *Eng. Annot. in loc* And upon all these should sorrow come: Their troubles should spread among, and over them universally, and take away their mirth and turn it into mourning, *In the Joyous City*] *City*, in a Colle-

Give Sense, for *Cities*, the several *Cities* throughout the whole Land of Judah. *Annot.* And these were *joyous or revelling Cities*, given to ease, delight and pleasure, abounding with much Luxury, whose profane joy and revelling should be followed with distress. *Because the Palaces shall be forsaken, the multitude of the City shall be left,*] There should be great desolations made in the places of their dwellings both for conveniency and delight: And great diminution of their numbers, mortality and misery lighting upon them. *The Forts and Towers shall be for Dens,*] Their places of strength, munition, defence and safeguard being deserted and lying waste, should become Receptacles and Dens for wild Beasts to lye down in. *For ever,*] or, for a long time, As the word (*Gnolam*) is often used. *Designat continuationem vel durationem non perpetuam semp:r, sed longam & non interruptam per aliquod tempus, & continuatam ad insignem aliquam periodum. Spanhem.* A Joy of wild Asses] These and other wild Creatures should range, run at large, play and disport themselves there, where sometimes dwellings and Castles were. *A Pasture of Flocks*] Cattle should graze in those places that were sometimes inhabited, they being left desolate. These and the like miseries should be, continue, and grow upon them, being set under Judgement.

2. The Period of these miseries. Till which they should be continued, and proceed; *viz.* until the Spirit should be poured out upon the People, and the gracious Effects of it obtained in them *v. 15: until the Spirit be poured upon us*] By Spirit here which is said to be poured out upon them, we may understand not so much the Person of the Holy Ghost (Not here to speak of the personal indwelling of the Spirit in all the Saints, as *2 Tim. 1. 14.*) As the saving gifts and graces of the Spirit, by the donation of which, persons are enlightened, & regenerated, sinners converted, & Saints more & more sanctified. And by pouring out of the Spirit, we may understand a plentiful effusion, or giving forth of the gifts and graces of the Spirit to the sound Conversion and through Sanctification of a People. The dispensation of the Spirit in all the gracious and saving operations thereof is exprest by giving the Holy Ghost, *Joh. 7. 39, This spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given.* And by pouring out the gift of the Holy Ghost, *Act. 14. 45. On the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost.* By the Spirit being poured out upon them therefore is intended, a plentiful

tiful and abundant measure of the communication of the gifts and graces of the Spirit unto them, and this was the determined period of their miseries. See more of this in M. J. Mather his Sermon on *Isai. 44. 3.* Qu. 1, 2. where these things are directly and fully spoken too. *From on High*] from God above, Father and Son. *And the Wilderness be a fruitful field, and the fruitful field be counted for a Forrest.*] I shall not trouble you with reciting the various Expositions given of this as in the parallel place, in *Isai. 29. 17.* but only lay down and improve that, which comparing them with the Text, and one with another, I take to be most probable. What is therefore express in the latter part of this Verse, we may take to intimate the immediate effects or fruits of the pouring out of the Spirit wrought upon, or in those upon whom it is poured. And they are two, 1. The Conversion of the unregenerate. *And the Wilderness be a fruitful Field,* i. e. Those that have been as a Wilderness, barren and unfruitful, bringing forth no fruit to God, but wild fruits of sin, they shall be changed, tilled, converted and made fruitful, to bring forth fruits of holiness unto God. 2. The admirable fruitfulness and encrease of grace in the godly; *And the fruitful Field be counted for a Forrest,* i. e. They that have a Principle of fruitfulness in them, and did bring forth fruit before, yet now upon the pouring out of the Spirit upon them shall receive such abundance of grace, and be so eminent in the acting of it, that what they did before shall be accounted as the fruit of a barren Forrest, in comparison of what they do now. Such a difference shall there be in their fruitfulness before and after the pouring out of the Spirit on them. Or the meaning may be *The fruitful field shall be counted for a Forrest,* i. e. Those that were before fruitful fields shall upon the pouring out of the Spirit fructify so incredibly, that they shall seem rather to be a Wood, a Forrest, a Thicket. then fields of Tillage. (by an appropriation of such expressions as are sometimes used concerning the incredible fertility of some Fields in grain and fruits, unto the exceeding great fruitfulness of persons in grace and spiritual, and holy actions) And so the Sense is the same as before. *Vide Angl. Annot in Isai. 25. 17.* and Calvin in *Pol. Synops. Crit. Ibid.*

3. The great turn and change following upon the pouring out of the Spirit, v. 16, 17, 18. *Then shall, &c.* The immediate Effects & fruits of the pouring out of the Spirit were express in the former Verse:

The

The mediate or more remote effect and consequent of it, is here expressed to be, the restoration and multiplication of sure mercies and blessings upon them in the Particulars mentioned in these verses. And they respect either,

1. Their Sanctification, as a holy and heavenly Conversation: v. 16. *Then Judgement shall dwell in the wilderness*, i.e. in illis qui olim Desertum erant. *Forerimus in Pol. Synop. Cris. in Loc.* Those that were as a wilderness before, untilld, untaught, unregenerate, & unsubdued to the will of God, being now converted, shall give heed to Judgement, equity, righteousness, honesty and piety, abandoning all ways of profaneness, debauchery, dishonesty, injustice, intemperance and impiety which before once they lived in. *And righteousness remain in the fruitfull field* Erga sita live exornatio effectorum Spiritus Dei in Sanctis: erunt, inquit, fructus spiritus in arvo, i.e. Ecclesia Dei, Justitia, &c. *¶ Ann. in Loc.* Christians, Professors who have given up their names to Christ shall be studiously careful to hold fast righteousness, sincerity and uprightness in all their carriages and actions towards God and man, being plain-hearted, right-down, fair and square in all their dealings: behaving themselves in all things honestly, justly and unblameably, being harmless, and without rebuke, putting away all semblance of dishonesty, unjust dealing, unfaithfulness, untruth, encroaching, covetousness, double-dealing, unsteadiness, shifting, winding, turning and whatsoever else is unworthy the vocation wherewith they are called. And these sure are blessed and happy times, when there are such fruits of sanctification so generally and universally appearing. Or,

2. Their Glorification, which concern the felicity and blessedness of their lives. And they are either,

1. Inward and spiritual blessings, Peace, Quietness and Assurance v. 17. *and the work of righteousness shall be peace, and the effect of righteousness, quietness and assurance for ever.* There shall be peace. Soul-peace. Peace with God, and the testimony of that peace in their Consciences: whence an holy serenity and calmness of soul, the peace of God which passeth all understanding keeping their hearts and minds through Jesus Christ: a religious composure of mind, resting quietly upon God alone, and depending on him with confident assurance of receiving protection (and all good) from him. *English Annot. in Loc.* Or,

2. Out-

2. Outward Blessings: peaceableness in their habitations, security and quietness in their dwellings, v. 18. *and my people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting places.* They shall have peace, safety, quietness and rest round about, together with all the blessings of such a merciful and heaven-born peace. Nor is it absurd or immethodical to rank this outward peace of the Saints under glorification; for it is to them a real freedome from misery & evill of punishment, wherein they experience the good-will & kindness of God, and therefore is a part or degree of Glorification begun. Huc pertinet [ad Glorificat. inchoat. scil.] paterna illa Dei Providentia, quæ Fidelibus invigilat semper in bonum, Ames Medus l. 2 c. 30. lb. 30.

For the timing this Prophecy in the Text, concerning the pouring out of the Spirit, and the effects and Consequents of it, it is variously fixed by Expositors, as, to the restitution of the Jewish state after Sennacheribs defeat: to the Jews return from the Babylonian Captivity: to the times of the Messiah in general: and to some particular time or times under the Gospel, and that either already past, or yet expected: That this Prophecy in the Text doth respect some particular time mainly and principally, is without doubt: But what that time is, I shall not make it my work to enquire or determine. It may suffice to the present purpose, that there is a general truth in the words; and that this Scripture may be and is in its proportion and measure fulfilled at other times besides that to which it hath a more particular and principal respect; and that there is such a dependance of our freedome from evils, and obtaining of mercyes upon the Spirits being poured out upon us as is exprest in the Text. It is written for our learning, and so we may improve it; and to this I shall apply my self.

In treating of these words, I shall not endeavour to draw out all the single observations from them that might be, but only to take up the general scope of them in this one Doctrine, viz.

Doct. *When God hath once set a People under a dispensation of Judgment, their miseries will be like to proceed, till there be the pouring out of the Spirit from on high upon them to their sound Conversion, and then there will be a restoration and multiplication of sure mercyes and blessings upon them.* This is the summe of the words; and as brief as I can will

A: 120 (1814/3) rev. E. x. 116 dat. 1802. 6. 11. v.

well give it. This Doctrine may be further opened in these Propositions;

Prop. I. *God doth sometimes set a People under a dispensation of Judgement.* As this People here. The Lord in the way of his Providence exposes them to Judgement, sets them in the way of misery, sorrow and calamity lighting upon them, follows them with evil: The general course of his dispensations toward them is afflictive: He does as it were set them as a mark to shoot the Arrows of his anger and displeasure at, Lam. 3. 12. *He hath bent his bow and set me as a mark for the Arrow.* He marks them out for Judgement, they are a people of his anger, a generation of his wrath, Jer. 7. 29. *he sets himself against them, he sets his face against them, Lev. 26. 17. And I will set my face against you.* He is sore displeased with them, and sets himself as it were with an angry countenance to punish their sin. He engages his Power and wrath against them, Ezek. 23. 25. *And I will set my jealousy against thee, and they shall deal furiously with thee.* He watches over them for evil, Jer. 44. 11, 27. *Behold I will set my face against you for evil, Behold I will watch over them for evil.* The Lord does as it were set himself to watch his opportunity to bring evil upon them, is against them on every side, and sets himself to afflict them.

Thus God sometimes sets a People under a dispensation of Judgement: And that, *because they have set themselves in a way that is not good.* They set themselves out of the way of holiness, and in the way of sin, and hence God sets himself in a way of Judgement, Lev. 26. 23, 24. *If ye will not be reformed by these things, but will walk contrary to me: then will I also walk contrary unto you, and will punish you.* Gods setting himself against a People is, because they have set themselves against God.

And 1. *They have set themselves against his Command.* They have rebelled against him, and broken his Laws, and cast his words behind their backs. Hence God in setting himself against a People sets their sins in the light of his Countenance. Psal. 90. 7, 8. *We are consumed by thine anger: and by thy wrath are we troubled. Thou hast set our iniquities before thee: our secret sins in the light of thy Countenance.* It is because of them, their sins, that God carries it in a way of displeasure towards any, Ezek. 14. 7, 8. Thus the Lord gives an account of his doing thus and thus with his People, *because they had sinned*

so and so against him, *Hof. 7. 2.* compared with *12. 3.* In the second Verse; *They consider not in their hearts that I remember all their wickedness: now their own doings have beset them about, they are before my face.* Then follows a particular numeration of their sins, to *ver. 12.* And in the 12 Verse, it follows; *where they shall go I will spread my Net upon them, I will bring them down as the Fowls of Heaven: I will chastize them as their Congregation hath heard. Woe unto them for they have fled from me: destruction unto them, because they have transgressed against me.* So *Ezra 8. 23.* *His power and wrath is against all that forsake him.*

2. *They have set themselves against his Reproofs.* Upon a Peoples falling into sin and backsliding from him, the Lord is wont to reprove them for their sin, give them warning of their danger, and call them to return: But when they will not hearken to entertain his reproofs, or embrace his Counsels, then are they set under Judgement, *Hof. 11. 7.* *And the Sword shall abide on his Cities, and shall consume his Branches, and devour them, because of their own Counsels. And my People are bent to backsliding from me: though they called them to the most High, none at all would exalt him.* Though God may punish for a single breach of his Command, yet he is not wont to cause his Judgements to abide, unless there have been a refusal of divine reproofs, *Prov. 1. 24, 31.* *Because I have called and ye refused, I have stretched out my hand and no man regarded: But ye have set at nought all my counsel, and would none of my reproof. I also will laugh at your calamity, &c.* God gives this expressly as a Reason of his giving up his people to Judicial dispensations, *Psal. 81. 11, 12.* *But my people would not hearken to my voice, and Israel would none of me: So I gave them up.*

3. *They have set themselves against his mercy and compassion where by he would have saved them.* God exercises a great deal of lenity towards a sinning people, and shows much compassion towards them, waiting and using means with much long suffering that they would return and be saved as *bei* gloth to give them up, *Hof. 11. 8.* *How shall I give thee up Ephraim? Psal 78. 42.* *But he being full of compassion forgave their iniquity, and destroyed them not: yea many a time turned he his anger away, and did not stir up all his wrath.* But when Gods love, grace, pitty and compassion is abused, then his wrath arises and is set against a People, then he gives them up to Judgement, *2 Chron. 36. 15, 16.* *And the Lord God of their Fathers sent to them by his messengers, rising up betimes and sending: because he had compassion*

on his People and on his dwelling place: But they mocked the Messengers of God, & despised his words, & misused his Prophets, until the wrath of the Lord arose against his people, till there was no remedy. *Hos. 7 1, 13, 15: When I would have healed Israel, then the iniquity of Ephraim was discovered, and the wickedness of Samaria. Though I have redeemed them, yet they have spoken lyes against me. Though I have bound and strengthened their Arms, yet do they imagine mischief against me.* Thus for these Reasons doth God set a People under a dispensation of Judgement.

Prop. II. *The misery of a People once so set under a dispensation of Judgement will be like to proceed and be growing. Their affliction will rise higher and higher. Their sorrows abound more and more. Their sorrows and miseries will be like to encrease and grow.*

1. *Extensivè.* extensively. They will be like to be of great extent, to be universal or at least general; To extend to all kinds of misery and to all persons.

1. *To all kinds of misery, Psal. 16. 4. Their sorrows shall be multiplied that hasten after another God: As they may be said to do, who cast off the true God his fear & service. All kind of misery will be like to fall upon them. The Lord reckons up various kinds of miseries which he threatens to bring upon his disobedient sinning people, Lev. 26. 14, to 39 And they are exprest as such as should be rising and growing, from one degree to a seven times greater, if the first did not reclaim them, ver. 18. I will punish you yet seven times more for your sins. Which rise of punishment is four times exprest within the compass of these verses. And in Jer. 15. 3. I will appoint over them four kinds, saith the Lord. And in Am. 4. Many kinds of affliction are mentioned which God had brought upon his obstinate and impenitent People.*

2. *To all persons: All shall feel something thereof more or less. Text, ver. 13. Upon all the houses. The hand of God will fall heavy every where. Judgement come upon all quarters, there will be no corner or place for escape, Ezek. 21. 15. I have set the point of the Sword against all their gates, &c. The Clouds of Gods Judgements which at first were small and little will be like to spread and grow thick upon such a people, till even the Heavens be dark over them, Isai. 5. 30. And in that day they shall roar against them, like the roaring of the Sea: and if one look unto the Land, behold darkness and sorrow, and the light is darkned in the Heavens thereof: Which way soever they look, up-*
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wards or downwards, on this side or that, there shall be trouble and distress encompassing all of them as men in a Fog. There shall be universally trouble on Earth and anger from Heaven and no appearance of ease or relief to such a People, *Jer. 45. 5. Behold I will bring evil upon all flesh saith the Lord. and 12. 12. The Sword of the Lord shall devour from the one end of the Land even to the other end of the Land; no flesh shall have peace.*

2. *Intensivè, Intensively.* Their miseries and sorrows will be like to grow more intense and sharp, pinching and distressing, to have more and more of divine anger in them, and so be more hard to be borne, and fill those under them with anguish and vexation, *Isai. 8. 2 1. And they shall pass through it hardly basted and hungry: and it shall come to pass, that when they shall be hungry, they shall fret themselves.* Their necessities and distresses shall be such as shall make them grow extremely impatient and exceedingly disquieted, *ver. 22. behold trouble and darkness, dimness of anguish: and they shall be driven to darkness.* Many words of the same notion are heaped up to express the great extremity of their distresses. *Eng. Annot.* The Lord will make more and more wrath appear in his Judgments upon such a People, make his Arrows in their hearts sharp, cutting and piercing, *Psal. 45. 5. Thine Arrows are sharp in the heart of the Kings enemies.* He will put bitterness in their cup, fill their Souls with bitterness, make their affliction and so their condition bitter, *2 King. 14. 26. The Lord saw the affliction of Israel, that it was very bitter, Lam. 3. 15. He hath filled me with bitterness, he hath made me drunken with wormwood.* Expressions denoting the sharpness and extremity of their affliction. When God is fit in a way of Judgement against a people, he will make the end and issue of that dispensation a bitter day, *Am. 8. 10. And I will make it as the mourning of an only Son, and the end thereof as a bitter day.*

Thus the sorrow and misery of a people set under Judgement will be like to grow more general and more and more bitter and pinching. And that;

1. *Because God is set against them as an Enemy, Ezek. 15. 7. And I will set my face against them, they shall go out from one fire, and another fire shall devour them: and ye shall know that I am the Lord, when I set my face against them.* It is impossible but that they should sink more and more, whom God in his anger hath set himself against, *Ezek. 22.*

14. *Can thine heart endure, or can thine hands be strong in the dayes that I shall deal with thee? I the Lord have spoken it and will do it.* Gods being against us is enough to make every thing to be hurtful to us. There is no standing before him when he is angry, nor can any creature give us relief, *Psal. 76. 7. Thou even thou art to be feared: and who may stand in thy sight when once thou art angry?* Jer. 10. 10. *At his wrath the Earth shall tremble, and the Nations shall not be able to abide his indignation,* Job. 34. 29. *When he biddeth his face, who then can behold him? whether it be done against a Nation, or against a man only.* If God give charge to the contrary, no creature can afford us any relief.

2. *Because there are not waters of true repentance brought to quench Gods anger? Or, there is not a turning and returning unto God.* Gods anger against such a People, as he hath set himself against in Judgement, it is as a burning flame, and it will as the flame of fire rise and grow higher & fiercer, unless prevented, quenched & removed by unfeigned Repentance and reformation: Which though not efficiently causal, yet qualifies the Subject for the receiving of the Mercy which God for his own sake will bestow through Christ, *Isai. 66. 15. For behold the Lord will come with fire, and with his Chariots; like a Whirlwind, to render his anger with fury, and his rebuke with flames of fire,* *Isai. 5. 24, 25. Therefore as the fire devoured the Stubble, and the flame consumeth the chaff: So, &c. Therefore is the Anger of the Lord kindled against his People, & he hath stretched forth his hand against them, & hath smitten them, and the Hills did tremble, & their Carcasses were torn in the midst of the streets.* For all this his anger is not turned away, but his hand is stretched out still. The reason of this continuance of Gods anger is directly given, *Isai. 9. 12, 13.* where the same words are repeated; *For all this his anger is not turned away, &c.* and the reason plainly given; *For the people turneth not unto him that smiteth them, neither do they seek the Lord of Hosts.* So long as there is not repentance and reformation in a people there is no likelihood that Gods wrath should be pacified by Judgements formerly inflicted: but rather that there will be a procedure to further, greater and sorer Judgements: For when the Sovereign God hath once taken a people thus into his hand, it is likely in reason that he will have his will of them or bring them very low, mend or mar them, bow or break them, *Lev. 26. 23. And i, ye will not be reformed by these things: and*

ver. 27, 28. And if ye will not for all this hearken unto me, but walk contrary unto me: then I will walk contrary unto you also in fury.

3. Because where there is not repentance and reformation under Affliction there will be an increase of provocation. The Lords expectation is frustrated, and thereby will he be provoked: Besides such who thus frustrate Gods expectation they will grow more hardened in sin and security by affliction, if not more bold to sin, Zeph. 3. 7. I said, surely thou wilt fear me, thou wilt receive instruction: so their dwelling should not be cut off, howsoever I punished them: but they rose early and corrupted all their doings. And this will be like to continue and increase their affliction, Hos. 13. 2, 3. And now (postquam moniti fuerint & castigati, Rivet. After they have been warned and chastened) they sin more and more. Therefore they shall be as the morning cloud, & as the early dew it passeth away, as the chaff that is driven with a whirlwind out of the floor, and as a smock out of the Chimney. By which four similitudes, the greatness and certainty of their calamity is denoted, and that that flourishing prosperity which they hoped for should come to nothing.

Prop. III. The miseries of such a people will be like to proceed till there be a pouring out of the Spirit from on high upon them to their sound conversion. Until the Spirit be poured upon us from on high, &c. Text. ver. 15. If God hath once so far taken a people in hand as to set them under a dispensation of Judgement, there is no grounded hope of their deliverance and release in mercy, till God do in a gracious manner pour out his Spirit upon them, or wonderfully work a saving change in them and among them by the effectual operation of his holy Spirit: Till abundance of grace be given forth for the procuring and effecting of their sound conversion.

The Spirit is given or poured out for that end that there may be Conversion. And that either,

1. The Conversion of sinners, which is express in the Text by, the Wilderness becoming a fruitful field, Psal. 31. 13. Sinners shall be converted unto thee. The Lord sends down his Spirit for this end to convince, awaken, convert, regenerate and sanctifie sinners, Job. 16. 8, 11. to open their eyes, to turn them from darkness to light and from the power of Satan unto God: This is the work of the Ministry, Act. 26. 18. which works effectually only through the power, presence and assistance of the Spirit accompanying of the same. It is the work of
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the Spirit efficiently to deliver sinners out of the power of darkness, and translate them into the Kingdome of the dear Son of God: to make them of unholy, profane, proud and vain; serious, humble, holy, pious and conformed to the image and will of God: to love those things [of God] which they have not loved nor regarded; and to hate and abandon those things [of sin, world and vanity] which they have loved and set their hearts upon, 1 Cor. 6. 11. *And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.* Or,

2. *The Conversion of Saints and Christians.* Which is exprest in the Text according to the interpretation given, by; *the fruitful field being counted for a forest.* Peter was converted before Satan sifted him and made him deny his Master, for faith Christ; *I have prayed for thee that thy Faith fail not:* But he must be converted again and therefore Christ sayes to him; *When thou art converted strengthen thy brethren,* Luk. 22. 32. though the relative change of state in believers is but once wrought, it is wrought at once and continues for ever, and the real change in their persons by sanctification is perfect in its parts, yet this latter admits of degrees: It is so wrought in the believer as that it needs constant carrying on in this life: and it may so decay as to need to be done over again, and so the Christian to pass under the work of Conversion again, a second time. Hence David prayes when he had as it were lost the work or effect of former Conversion, that God would *create in him a clean heart, and renew a right Spirit within him,* Psal. 51. 10. 'Apprehending himself deprived in a manner of that holy disposition and power of godliness, which God had formerly wrought in him, as before he begged for pardon, so here for the re-estification of Gods Spirit: The word *Renew* Leoniceive hath reference to his former piety, which he found greatly decayed in him, wherewith he desires to be established again. Jackson *in loc.* Now this is the work of the Spirit to renew the work of Conversion, and carry on the work of grace in believers. He is given for this end, for the furthering the work of grace and holiness in believers in renewed and more strong acts of repentance, faith and obedience: to make them more free from sin and pollution, more and more conformable to the will of God in all things, more abundantly fruitful in every good work: to enlarge them in duty: and to make their faces and conversations to shine, that they shall in good earnest be engaged for God, his service and glory. Hence

Hence when the Spirit is poured out upon a people, All, or the generality of them, or at least very many among them will be either enquiring for, or walking in the way to Zion with their faces thitherward, *Jer. 50. 4, 5. In those days, and in that time, saith the Lord, the children of Israel shall come, they and the children of Judah together, going and weeping; they shall go and seek the Lord their God. They shall ask the way to Zion with their faces thitherward.* Which last expression may intimate their sincere intention and fixed resolution to go on in the way they enquired after. *"To set ones face, is to fix the Affections and actions without declining to any other way.* Wilson Christ.
 "Distion. Such a people will be bound for God, having received the Spirit of God every one will go bound in the Spirit to the performance of his duty and the glorifying and honouring of God. They shall be signally carried out in seeking Gods face and doing of his will. There would appear a right and full bent of Spirit for God in persons, doing all sincerely in the name and in an evangelical manner exactly according to the will of the Lord Jesus, heartily giving thanks to God and the Father by him, *Col. 3, 17.* The Spirit of God and of holiness will breath and be manifest in them: There will be a godly sorrow and mourning for sin in All, *Ezek. 7. 16. But they that escape of them shall escape and shall be on the mountains like doves of the valleys, all of them mourning, every one for his iniquity.* A hearty grief that they have displeased, dishonoured and provoked God by their sin: And a sincere and earnest care and endeavour to repair the honour and glory of Gods Name by future holy obedience. These are the immediate effects and fruits of the pouring out of the Spirit.

And till the Spirit be thus poured out and these gracious effects of it in some good measure obtained to the Conversion and Sanctification of a people under Judgement their misery and sorrow will be like to proceed and continue. And that,

1. Because the profaneness, unbelief and impenitency of sinners, and the unholiness and unfruitfulness of Christians are the causes of these sorrows and miseries. And as till the causes be removed there is no probability that the effect should cease, *Job. 7. 12. neither will I be with you any more, except ye destroy the accursed from among you.* So in order to the removal of these from a people, the pouring out of the Spirit from on high upon them to their sound conversion and sanctification

sanctification is the grand expedient. And therefore till this be they will remain a generation of Gods wrath: His anger will not be like to be turned away from them till this work be wrought in and for them.

2. Because till the Spirit be in some measure poured out upon them they will not be fit for mercy. They will not duely acknowledge nor improve it, but profane and abuse it. Till by the gracious work of Gods Spirit in them they be brought to a compliance with his will, they will not be in a posture to receive mercy: They will not carry it aright under mercy, *Psalm. 106. 8. 13, 21. Nevertheless he saved them for his Names sake, But, they soon forgot his works, they waited not for his Counsel. They forgot God their Saviour, which had done great things.* And therefore there is little probability that God will bestow Salvation upon such a people.

3. Till then they will be provoking God, Though the Lord be striking them they will certainly be adding new provocations, *Jer. 5. 3. Thou hast stricken them but they have not grieved: thou hast consumed them, but they have refused to receive correction, they have made their faces harder then a rock, they have refused to return, I said, 57. 17. For the iniquity of his Covetousness was I wroth and smote him: I hid me, and was wroth, and he went on frowardly in the way of his heart.* After this manner will they certainly do, till Sovereign grace heal them; till such time as there be a gracious effusion of the Spirit from on high upon them to change, convert and sanctifie them. And therefore notwithstanding all the evil God hath done unto them, it will be probable that his Anger will not be turned away, but his hand stretch out still against them.

Prop. IV. *When the Spirit from on high is poured out upon a People to their sound Conversion there will be a restoration and multiplication of sure mercyes and blessings upon them.* Though such a people were under affliction and expressions of divine displeasure before. The Seal of Gods providence would then turn towards them and there would be a remarkable, glorious and happy change among them, *Text, ver. 16, 17, 18.* Then there should be a new face and aspect of divine providence upon them, and the clouds of divine displeasure would blow over. What before was taken away or withheld from them should be then restored or given, and what mercy they want, bestowed upon them. They should have mercyes and blessings indeed,

deeds, that are worthy the name of blessings, store of sure mercyes and blessings.

1. *There would be great holiness.* Holiness would abound : There would be *Holiness to the Lord* as it were engraven in bells and pots, *Zech. 14. 20. 21.* Holiness would be conspicuous both in persons and actions. Judgment and righteousness would dwell and remain every where both in the wilderness and in the field, *Text, ver. 16. Then Judgement shall dwell in the wilderness, and righteousness remain in the fruitful field.*

1. *We should then see sinners studying and following after Holiness.* Christians might then see those ignorant profane, wicked creatures, whom they now with grief behold or hear of, that they mind nothing but their vanity, their pride, excess, intemperance, disorder, who now will not be perswaded to pray, to read, or hear the word of God with diligence, reverence and obedience, who will be profane, wanton, intemperate, negligent, irreligious, who will do any thing but what they should, and every thing that they should not : But then we might see them serious, humble, attentive to what is good, acting in the fear of God, diligent and studious to know the will of God, careful to please God, fearful of displeasing him, circumspect in their actions, Christian in their behaviour, adorning the doctrine of the Gospel, denying all ungodliness and worldly lusts, and living soberly, righteously & godly in the world, *Tit. 2. 12. Isai. 32. 4. The heart also of the rash shall understand knowledge.* [“Such as were heady and inconsiderate, as fond and foolish persons usually are, shall then be better advised, and by attending to the word of God, come to understand aright the will of God. *And the tongue of the stammerers shall be ready to speak plainly.*”] “Men by their religious speech and communication, at which they did but stammer, when they assayed ought before, shall now manifest the inward alteration and change of their hearts. *Engl. Annot.* There are many who having little or nothing of Religion in their hearts, little or no discerning or taste of things of the Spirit of God. when they are put upon it to speak of any spiritual matters, or to perform any religious duty, they do miserably stammer, fumble and falter, they cannot speak, or but very brokenly, though it may be they can speak fast enough and are of voluble speech in other things : But were there abundant effusion of the Spirit upon these, it would loose their tongues and make them able

to speak distinctly, understandingly and feelingly of spiritual and holy things, *Isai. 29. 18.* And in that day shall the deaf hear the words of the book: and the eyes of the blind shall see out of obscurity and out of darkness. Those that were deaf to all the calls and warnings of God by his word and roūd, they would not hearken; that were blind, that could not, would not see, notwithstanding all that glorious light of Gods truth was held forth before them; they shall be recovered of those their former maladies; and by the Spirit of God effectually working with his word, they shall come to have their ears and eyes opened; to understand the truth and will of God, to give all credit, and yield all obedience thereto, and shall be brought out of that spiritual mist and darkness wherein they were before involved. And *Isai. 29. 24.* They also that erred in Spirit shall come to understanding, and they that murmured shall learn doctrine. Such as were wandring out of the way of understanding into wayes of error and wickedness, and were ready to murmur, be impatient and discontented to have their hearts rise against any that went about to stop them in their evil courses, and thence were ready to quarrel or speak untowardly of the messages or messengers of God, these shall come to themselves and set themselves to seek wisdom and understanding, to learn the doctrine and will of God, and shall betake themselves to, and walk in the wayes of wisdom. More passages to the same purpose we have in *Isai. 35. 5, 6, 7.* *Then*] when by the foregoing afflictions, Gods people being now fitted for mercy. God shall be pleased to afford it. *The eyes of the blind shall be opened.*] Those that were spiritually blind before, shall now being enlightned, see, conceive and understand, both the mystery of Godliness revealed in Gods word, and his mercy and goodness manifested in his works. *And the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped:*] They shall now listen to the word of God speaking in his book and by his messengers, that had no list to hearken to either before. *Then shall the lame man leap as an Hart,*] Men shall be cured of such spiritual defects in their Souls, whereby they were disabled unto sincere, upright, constant and chearful walking in Gods wayes. *And the tongue of the dumb sing.*] Those that have least tongue, or had no tongue at all, to ought that is good, yet shall they for joy sing and chant out the praises of him, that had done so great things for them. *For in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert.*] A type of the spiritual watering, whereby such persons and

places become fertile and fruitful, that were barren of all grace and goodness before. *And the parched ground shall become a Pool, and the thirsty Land springs of water: In the habitation of dragons where each lay shall be grafs with reeds and rushes.* The same thing in other terms. *Engl. Annot.* Thus do these Scriptures hold forth to us the great alteration that should be wrought in sinners by the pouring out of Gods holy Spirit upon them. One might then see them lamenting and abandoning their former folly and vanity and minding heaven in good earnest, acknowledging and confessing their iniquity, begging pardon with great earnestness, flying to Jesus Christ, relying on him, and faithfully endeavouring to live the life of Christ, to exalt him by a gospel becoming conversation. Oh what a wonderful sight would this be to see such dead bones live! How would this effect and ravish the hearts of those that are good? How would the heart, even the heart & reins of godly parents rejoice, when the heart of their children shall be thus wise and their lips speak right things? *Prov. 23. 15, 16.* What think you of this, you whose hearts are mourning for the dissoluteness of, or at least that you can see no more of godliness or hopefulness in your children? You are now often ashamed, and your face waxes pale, with care, fear and distress for your poor wandring children: but if you could once see them thus the work of Gods hands, being formed, moulded and fashioned for God, how full would your hearts and mouths then be of the praises of the holy one of Israel? How would you sanctify and glorify him? *Isai. 29. 22, 23: Jacob shall not now be ashamed, neither shall his face now wax pale: But when he seeeth his children, the work of my hands in the midst of him, they shall sanctify my Name, and sanctify the holy One of Jacob, and shall fear the God of Israel.*

2. We should then see Christians perfecting holiness in the fear of God. Making Religion their business. Studying to keep all Gods commandments and ordinances blameless, and to do all those things that are pleasing in his sight. Labouring to be eminently holy both in their religious and civil actions. Careful to prepare and dispose themselves to wait upon God in his service; conscientiously rising up to meet with God in the attendance on his Ordinances; Humbly, reverently, religiously, attentively waiting upon God, that one might see that the service of God is heartily intended by them, and that communion with God is sincerely breathed after by them in duties and

and Ordinances. Then we might hear them full of heavenly, spiritual and lively discourse, sweet and savoury words and speeches flowing from the good treasure and abundance of the heart; See them edifying, teaching and admonishing one another, *Col. 3. 16.* considering one another, exhorting and provoking to love & good works, *Heb. 10. 24, 25.* Then you might see sweet agreement, affection, cordialness, faithfulness and peaceableness among brethren, bearing and forbearing one another in love. Then you might see Christians amiable and exemplary in their civil conversation; not in the least seeking to defraud or go beyond others, nor unsteady in their words or promises, not conforming themselves to the world, or the customs or manners thereof, not disorderly, not proud, not froward, not unmerciful, not churlish, not intemperate, not ungrateful, not worldly, nor any way (at least not so many ways) unbecoming in their carriages or actions; but carrying an even thread of holiness and spiritualness throughout the whole of their conversation: Herein exercising themselves to have a conscience altogether void of offence both toward God and toward man, with a single eye and exactly minding the Rule in all their carriage towards both. Oh what desirable times would these be when piety and holiness should thus flourish! When those many and grievous and too just complaints as of the profaneness and dissoluteness of many unruly and ungoverned persons, so of the unchristian and unworthy carriages of Professors in many respects should cease and be no more to be found: And the glory of God, the honour of his Name and esteem of his Ordinances and ways should be highly advanced by the holy and amiable lives of all his Servants! This would be the consequent of an abundant gracious effusion of the Spirit upon a people.

2. *There would be great happiness.* Happy would the people be that were in such a case. Their condition would be exceeding comfortable. And that,

1. *In the enjoyment of inward peace, quietness and assurance.* Text, *ver. 17.* *And the work of righteousness shall be peace, and the effect of righteousness, quietness and assurance for ever.* They should be kept in perfect peace, *Isa. 26. 3.* Their Souls settled in quiet assured apprehensions of the grace and favour of God to them, enjoying that great peace which they have that love the Law of God without any offence

five disquietment. There should not then be such dismal horror seizing the Souls of poor creatures, as now doth the Souls of some poor wretches that have hardly minded they had Souls to save till death hath awakned them. There would not then be such doubtings, discouragements, difficulties, temptations, fears and faintings in persons labouring under Soul perplexities: But it should be well with their Souls, and they might walk up and down in the light of Gods countenance, *Psal. 89. 15.* they should experience the tokens of Gods favour toward them and be gladdened therewith, *Psal. 21. 6. Thou hast made him exceeding glad with thy countenance, Psal. 6. 7. Thou hast put gladness into my heart.* Whatever outward troubles & sorrows they meet with in the world, yet they should have inward peace, & be singularly supported, comforted & carryed through all outward distresses, *Job. 16. 22, and ye now therefore have sorrow: but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoyce.* As the sight of Christ after risen from the dead to his disciples comfortless and distressed upon their Lords crucifixion filled their hearts with solid and stable joy which none could take from them: So the sight and gracious presence of Christ by his holy Spirit with his afflicted Servants will eminently support and rejoyce their hearts under all their sorrows, when he shall provide them with the grace of the holy Spirit: And this *Diodate* understands by *Christs seeing his Disciples again*, in the Text now quoted. Hence is it spoken of the Servants of Christ, that they are, *As sorrowful yet alway rejoycing, 2 Cor. 6. 10. And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also, Rom. 5. 3. I am filled with comfort, I am exceeding joyful in all our tribulation, 2 Cor. 7. 4.* They have the peace of God which passeth all understanding keeping their hearts and minds through Christ Jesus, which eats out all their care, fear and disquietment, *Phil. 4. 6, 7.*

2. In the enjoyment of outward peace and quietness with the blessings of it. God would give his people, were they rightly spirited for God, his work and service, peace and rest round about. *Text, ver. 18. And my people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting places, Isai. 48. 18. Oh that thou hadst hearkned to my Commandments! then had thy peace been as a River, and thy righteousness as the waves of the Sea.* The Lord would give great prosperity to his people, were they sanctified and filled with the graces of his holy Spirit, at least what and how much would be good and best

best for them: He would order their outward conditions for their good and comfort: They should have his protection and blessing, &c. *as that were best, security from temporal evils, Psal. 91. 9, 10. Because thou hast made the Lord, which is my refuge, even the most High, thy habitation: There shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling.* Enemies open or secret should not prevail, nor their attempts prosper, because the Lord of Hosts himself would be their defence and safeguard, *Isai. 31. 5. As birds flying, so will the Lord of Hosts defend Jerusalem, defending also he will deliver it, and passing over, he will preserve it, Zech. 12. 9, 10. And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem. And I will pour upon the house of David and upon the Inhabitants of Jerusalem the spirit of grace &c.* Judgments that are destructive should cease and be removed from them, *Psal. 85. 1, 2, 3. Lord, thou hast been favourable unto thy Land: thou hast brought back the Captivity of Jacob: Thou hast forgiven the iniquity of thy people, thou hast covered all their sin, Selah. Thou hast taken away all thy wrath: thou hast turned thy self from the fierceness of thine anger, Psal. 91. 3. Surely he shall deliver thee from the snare of the fowler: and from the noisome pestilence.* And all convenient and comfortable mercies and blessings should be conferred upon them, *Psal. 85. 12. Yea, the Lord shall give that which is good: and our Land shall yield her increase.*

1. USE. Hence learn, *That all Gods Dispensations are of exceeding great weight.* There is no one of Gods Providences, especially that concern the body of a people, & more especially his people, that is inconsiderable. The condition of a people is much altered by the pouring out or with-holding of Gods Spirit: it is of very great concernment in what manner the blessed God carries it to a people, whether in a way of anger or favour. Love or displeasure in the dispensations of Gods Providence, hath an efficacious influence to the weal or woe of any. If the Lord be with a person or people In the way of his gracious dispensation, they will be blessed and magnified exceedingly. *2 Chron. 1. 1. and the Lord his God was with him, and magnified him exceedingly. Psal. 65. 4. & 144. 15.* But if God forsake and depart from them their case will be wofull. *Hos. 9. 12. Yea, woe also to them when I depart from them.* There is a powerfull and irresistible efficacy of Gods Providence whether mercifull or afflictive upon his people, It will work upon them: His favour will raise, his anger will depress

deprets and sink them. His dispensations are no vain things, *Psal. 36. 7.* Lord by thy favour thou hast made my mountain to stand strong, thou didst hide thy face and I was troubled, *Job. 34. 29.* When he giveth quietness, who then can make trouble? and when he hideth his face, who then can behold him? whether it be done against a nation, or against a man only.

USE 2. Learn hence, to be sensible of the misery and danger of our case, whom, as we may justly conclude, God hath set under a dispensation of Judgment. And there being such weight in Gods dispensations we had need be sensible hereof. The righteous and holy God seems to be now weary of repenting concerning us, as he hath oftentimes done, and not to act towards us as formerly: When his hand hath been upon us heretofore he hath repented and not stirred up all his wrath, As, *Psal. 78. 38.* But he being full of compassion forgave their iniquity, and destroyed them not, yea, many a time turned he his anger away, and did not stir up all his wrath. And *Psal. 106. 44, 45.* Nevertheless he regarded their affliction when he heard their cry. And he remembered for them his Covenant and repented according to the multitude of his mercies. But now God in his providence seems to be speaking in the same language to us as to them, *Jer. 15. 6.* Thou hast forsaken me, saith the Lord, thou art gone backward: therefore will I stretch out mine hand against thee, and destroy thee, I am weary with repenting. The Lord is exposing us and laying us open to Judgment, setting us in the way of misery, watching over us for and following us with evil. And our condition seems to be somewhat like what is expressed, *Job. 30. 15, 19.* Terrors are turned upon me: they pursue my Soul as the wind: and my welfare passeth away as a cloud. And now my Soul is poured out upon me: the dayes of affliction have taken hold upon me. The hand of God is gone out against us and notwithstanding all that is come upon us, his anger is not turned away, but his hand is stretched out still. The Almighty (though admirably just and holy) is dealing bitterly with us, *Psal. 69. 3.* Thou hast shewed thy people hard things: thou hast made us to drink the wine of astonishment.

1. Misery and distress grow general and universal. As *Job. 30. 14.* They came upon me as a wide breaking in of waters: in the desolation they rolled themselves upon me. The Lord is compassing and afflicting us on every side, As *Isai. 29. 3.* I will camp against thee round about, &c. Affliction comes up as it were from all quarters and makes its way to all places,

places and persons almost more or less. In our late and present troubles of sword, sickness and mortality there is scarce any but feels some thing whereof they are ready to complain, either in person, estates, relations: And fears of what may yet come by this or the other means, are even ready to amaze the hearts of all that are so serious to consider any thing. So that there is an eminent accomplishment upon us at this day of that solemn word in *Ezek* 21. 15, 16, 17. *I have set the point of the sword against all their gates, that their heart may faint; and their ruines be multiplied. Ah it is made bright, it is wrapt up for the slaughter. Go thee one way or other, either on the right hand or on the left, whithersoever thy face is set. I will also smite my hands together and I will cause my fury to rest: I the Lord have said it.*

2. God hears not our Prayers, i.e. Our publick prayers or prayers for the publick. There is no time so bad, but God hears the prayers of his dear Servants (though they may not alwayes be able to perceive it) that watch and keep their garments, which they make to him for grace and mercy to their own Souls, *Ezek* 14. 14. *Though these three men Noah; Daniel and Job were in it; they should deliver but their own Souls: though their own they should deliver.* But publick petitions put up for publick deliverance, help and mercy, seem to be thrown by, not to be received or granted. And this is an Argument of a dispensation of Judgement. God is wont when he favours his people to be nigh to them in all things that they call upon him for, *Deut.* 4. 7. But when he sets his face against them then he denies audience to their prayers, *Jer.* 14. 12. *When they fast I will not hear their cry.* He forbids his faithful Servants to pray for them, *Jer.* 11. 14. *Therefore pray not thou for this people, neither lift up a cry, or prayer for them: for I will not hear them in the time that they cry unto me for their trouble.* And if the eminentest of his Servants do pray for them, he will not hear them, *Jer.* 15. 1. *Though Moses and Samuel stood before me, yet my mind could not be towards this people.* The Lord does as it were abscond, withdraw and conceal himself from such a people that he may not be found by them: seems to cover up himself that their cry and prayer may not come at him to trouble him in that which he intends nor to do, *Lam.* 3. 8, 44. *Isai.* 29. 1, 2. *Let them kill Sacrifices: yet I will distress Ariei, and there shall be heaviness and sorrow.* And after this manner is the dispensation of God to us at this day. And therefore oh that we could see that we are in a bad case, that we were indeed

indeed sensible of the misery and danger of our condition being thus set under Judgement ! It is our great misery that nothing will awaken us. How foolish are we, what sottish Children ? Shall God break us to pieces, make us to go backward, to stumble and fall, and be broken, and snared and taken, and stop his ear to our cries, and shall not we be affected with our misery ? Oh that we could hold up our hard hearts to be broken by the powerful hand of a gracious God Lord smite these Rocks ! Make us sensible ! Make us relent ! Make us mourn under thine anger !

USE 3. Hence see a reason of the continuance and growing of our sorrows. We are set under a dispensation of Judgment, and the Spirit is not yet poured out from on high upon us. And therefore no wonder if our troubles grow more extensive, numerous and general ; and more intense, sharp and piercing. God hath in just anger set himself against us, and we are not yet turned and set for him by the effectual pouring out of the Spirit upon, and working of it in us. For,

1. *How little kindly and sincere mourning for sin is there among us ?* That is one special effect of the pouring out of the Spirit on a people that have been rebellious ; *They shall look upon him, whom they have pierced and mourn, Zech. 12. 10.* They shall mourn for their abominations and for their neglects of Christ. But how little of this mourning do we hear of amongst us in these dayes ? Men and Women are heart whole, though there be much guilt upon them, and it may be their corruptions are yet whole and entire in them : They can do this and that evil and neglect this and that duty, and yet not mourn. There are many poor creatures can rejoyce in their sins : But, Alas ; how few are in bitterness for them ? where are the persons that sow in tears, that go forth and weep bearing precious seed, as *Psalm. 126. 5, 6.* Many are apt to make their moan for want of health, want of peace, want of money, &c. But how few are there that lament and mourn truly for want of a broken heart, for want of pardon of sin, the favour of God and his grace ? Were there more of this, there would be hope. As is the Proverb ; *Corn sown in a flood comes up like a wood :* Were there this sowing in floods of tears of true repentance, we might then hope for an abundance of the fruits and graces of the Spirit and the blessings accompaning them to follow. But, alas ! how low are our hopes from this ground ?

2. *How little activity and delight in the service and worship of God*
and

and reaching after Communion with God therein is there among us? how dull, cold and unspiritual are most in the work and service of God? Now the Spirit is a quickning Spirit, and if that were poured out on us we should be lively, active, and vigorous in the service and worship of God, Joh. 6. 63. It is the Spirit that quickeneth. We should serve God with utmost intention and affection, we should be never better then when in his presence reaching after communion with him. As David, Psal. 27. 4. and 42. 1, 2. But alas how little is our heart drawn out to, and strength put forth in the house, worship and Ordinances of God! we drive too heavily, we either want wheels, or oyl to our wheels.

3. *How little of a praying frame, of a spirit of grace and supplication is among us? Where the Spirit of Christ is, there are these Abba's, those groanings that cannot be uttered, Gal. 4. 6. God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father, Rom. 8. 26. The Spirit it self maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. Where there is any good measure of the Spirit there is liberty of access to God, there will be freedom of pouring out the heart before God and strong wrestling with God, holy importunity and taking the Kingdome of heaven by violence. But alas how little is there of these things? Our prayers are too cold, dead, formal, lifeless, insipid and wordy only. How little of a melting frame in our prayers and humble brokenness therein, and how little vehement breathings of Soul after, and strong aſſings of faith upon the Lord Jesus therein? How little of patient and painful wrestlings with the Lord in them? How little of earnest looking after prayers, and believing expectation, and waiting for a gracious answer of them.*

4. *How little studying and practising of Holiness is among us? Little of a Gospel-becoming conversation. Were the Spirit of God put within us it would cause us to walk in his statutes and keep his Judgements and do them, Ezek. 36. 27. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my Judgements and do them. We should then live holy and amiable lives, our light would shine before men and so give occasion of much glory to God. But how do we walk at all peradventures with God in our conversation? We are too uncertain and uneven, if not unholy therein. This is a thing confessed by most. Oh that it were lamented and reformed by All!*

3. *How little breathings of love to God, his wayes, Ordinances and Saints are among us?* Were the holy Ghost in the gifts and graces of it given to us in plentiful manner, the love of God would be shed abroad in our hearts, it would be much there, *Rom. 5. 5. The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the holy Ghost which is given to us.* We should entirely love God and dearly love his word, Saints and wayes: The bent and stream of our affections would be turned this way. But alas! How low does our affection run to God, to his house, to his word, to his Ordinances, and one to another. How eager are we in our pursuits of other things? but after these not so earnest.

It is too too evident that of these things mentioned there is too little among us, but of their contraries too much: There is too much boldness in, and impenitency for sinning; too much neglect of, formality and deadness in prayer; too much of weariness in and under, and listlessness to the worship & service of God; too much heedlessness, carelessness, unholiness & profaneness in conversation; too much loathing, slighting, undervaluing & disregarding of God his word, Ordinances & Saints: Which plainly show our want of the pouring out of the Spirit: And hence is our trouble continued and growing.

USE 4. *Learn to observe the motions and breathings of Gods Spirit that we may discern the signs of the times.* We are from this Text informed that the pouring out, or with-holding of the Spirit, hath a great influence to alter or dispose the frame or manner or state of times and dispensations: And therefore this dispensation of God concerning his Spirit is a special *signe* of the times, a *signe* for us to know the times by, or to understand what the work of God is, or is like to be in the times we live in. It is the duty of Christians to labour to discern the signs of the times, for want of which our Saviour blames and sharply reproveth those, *Math. 16. 3. O ye hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky, but can ye not discern the signes of the times?* *Luk. 12. 56. But how is it that ye do not discern this time?* That was the time of the Messiah and his coming; of which there were special signs by which they might have apprehended and understood it, had they been wise and diligent to have marked the same. * The signes of any times they are those visible appearances of Gods providence where-
by God leads us to discern that which is more inward as to his purposes, intentions and expectations. By these signes we may be led to observe or understand what God intends with, or to a people in such or such a time, which way the providence of God is at present working

ing, or like to work toward such a people; what God is doing with or among them. Now the Spirit of God in the pouring out or withdrawing of it, being a special eminent and remarkable signe of the times, by a wise and prudent observation of the motions and workings of that, we may be signally led to this discerning of the times. And therefore let all Christs discip'les take due notice and observation of this matter. And consider particularly,

1. *What movings of the Spirit there are in the Souls of men and women in these times.* What solemn awakenings and sound convictions wrought by the Spirit in the hearts of sinners: what wooings and allurings to draw their Souls unto God: What noise there is, rushing and shaking caused by the wind of the Spirit among the *dry bones*. Do we see them coming together bone to his bone, and standing up on their feet from the dead? Is the Spirit of God striving, mightily shaking, powerfully and irresistibly working upon the hearts of secure sinners? Does it force them to cry out of their sin and misery, wretched and woful condition? Does it terrifie them from persisting in, or meddling with iniquity? Does it humble and make them look about them with greatest care and sollicitude how they may do to escape the wrath of God and to obtain Salvation? Are these workings of the Spirit upon the hearts of sinners in these times? Speak you who still remain unregenerate! Is the Spirit of God still dealing with you by awakening, warning and not letting you alone to go on in sin, and alluring you by love to Jesus Christ? Or hath it done striving with you in that solemn manner and moving upon you in that winning way which formerly it hath done, whereby it made you sometimes to listen to its motions? Have you got the mastery of the Spirit by frequent resistance, that now you will not be jog'd or moved by it? Or hath the Spirit ever thus moved upon you? Will you let us know how it is with you in this matter, that we may the better understand what God is doing or about to do? If there be these movings, awakenings & allurings of the Spirit in the Souls of men and women in any considerable measure among us, it is a good signe: But if not, it is surely bad.

2. Consider, *what presence of God is with his word in the dispensation of it, and what workings of the word there are upon and in the hearts of hearers.* What impression the Word of the Gospel laboured in, takes: Whether it tends to hardning or softning, whether it be a seed sown upon good ground, or as seed thrown by the way side, or hath only some lighter impressions. Particularly, E 2 1. What

1. *What subduing of hearts and wills is wrought by it?* What strong holds pulled down, what vain refuges discovered, what sinful pleas taken off thereby? Do we see those that are Enemies to Christ falling down before him when he rides forth conquering and to conquer by his word? *Psal. 110. 2. The Lord shall send the Rod of thy strength out of Zion.* The preaching of the Gospel, accompanied with the "mighty working of the Spirit of Christ, is the Rod of strength, or the "strong Scepter whereby Christ doth mightily subdue and govern "his people, *Psalm. in loc.* And where there is a presence of the Spirit accompanying the dispensation of the Word, it will subdue hearts.

2. *What heart-breakings and Soul-meltings there are under the Word of God?* How does the hammer of Gods word wielded by the Spirit break the rock in pieces? *Jer. 23. 29. Is not my word like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces?* Does the word divide betwixt the joynts & the marrow, pierce to the discerning of the inward thoughts and intents of the heart? Do men and women sit trembling under the hearing of Gods word? Are their Souls plainly and wholly laid open to be wounded and healed by the word of God? Does the word move and work kindly and sweetly upon the heart to perswade, to draw, to instruct, to correct, to awe, to unite the heart to God? Does it fully unravel our own woven webs, kindly humble us and make us fall all to pieces, as in our selves that we have no kind of thing to take to; and does it sweetly allure and work up our hearts to an earnest, hearty and thankful devolving the whole weight and concernment of our restless, helpless Souls upon the everlasting Arms of a tender and gracious Father in Christ Jesus? Does it bring us to clasp about a strong, gracious and faithful Redeemer and Saviour, as who will hold there and not let him go, because else we shall perish? Or is it so that the heat of Gods word dispensed will not thaw or melt our frozen hearts, how oft soever they are held to this fire? *Is not my word like as a fire, saith the Lord?*

3. *What affection there is to the word of God.* What love to, longing for and desire after it. Is it the delight, joy and rejoycing of persons to be hearing, reading and practising according to the holy word of God? Is it as it was with David, *Psal. 119. 97. Oh how love I thy Law! Psal. 42. 1, 2. As the hart panteth after the water-brooks, so panteth my Soul after thee O God. My Soul thirsteth for God, for the living God: when shall I come and appear before God? Psal. 84. 2. My*

Soul

Soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the Courts of the Lord, Psal. 122. 1. I was glad when they said unto me; Let us go into the house of the Lord. Or are we little affected to, and our hearts little drawn out after the word of God.

3. Consider, *what tenderness of heart and heart-smiting for sin there is among us?* Where there is much of the grace of the Spirit the heart will be tender, and such a mans heart will smite him upon every offence against God, and upon every appearance of his anger. As Josiah's heart was tender and he humbled himself before the Lord upon the hearing of what God spake against Judah, 2 King. 22. 19. And Davids heart smote him upon his inconsiderate rash actions, 1 Sam. 24. 5. and 2 Sam. 24. 10. Now what of this heart tenderness, and grief, and mourning for sin and Gods anger is there among us? Does the least transgression or miscarriage wound and grieve the Soul? Is a vain thought a trouble? Is an hypocritical frame or inclination a grief? Any appearance of evil disquieting, that the least corruption cannot be born without crying to God for deliverance? Or can persons bear away with lighter and lesser evils, and it may be grosser miscarriages also? Let sin go without lamenting, or bewailing it, or being much concerned about it? be loose in their lives and ungirt in their Religion, and yet full peace?

4. Consider, *what lively vehement outgoings of Soul to God in prayer there are among us.* What of humble and holy access, freedome and familiarity with God in seeking him. Doe persons (even Christians) freely, easily and as it were naturally pour out their Souls to God? Can they by Faith take hold of God, and wrestle it out with him, and not let him go till he bless them? The spirit of grace is a spirit of supplications also, Zech. 12. 10. Or is it so, that many neglect calling upon God wholly, others do it in hypocrisy, many in meer formality, and even Christians themselves find it exceeding difficult to get up their hearts at any time to any earnestness, or suitableness in this duty?

5. Consider, *what concernment of Soul there is for the glory and work of God among us.* Are we deeply engaged in, heartily taken up about, and diligently labouring in the promoting of Gods work, and procuring of his glory? Is it our chief care and principal endeavour that the work of Christ may be upheld, continued, and transmitted to posterity? Is every one in his place and capacity thoughtful and careful about this in good earnest, that it may be done? Or are we no

whit or little concerned about the glory and work of God among us? Are not our own concerns minded more? If we can look to our selves, let Christ look to himself and his work, as the Apostle complains, *Phil. 2. 21. All seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christs.* Are there few upon whose hearts doth rest the care and sollicitude what will become of the Lords work? It is the property of such as inherit any good measure of a true Gospel spirit to seek the glory of God.

These are some of the motions and operations of the Spirit which we are to observe in our selves and others, and by which we may be directed to discern the times, what God is doing or about to do, and what is like to become of us. When these things shall be, we may look for good times: If there be much of these things there is good hope: if little, little hope: if none, no hope: Only we may here, as alwayes elsewhere, reserve to God his *absolute Sovereignty* in working. Be we never so bad, he may of his *Sovereign grace* save, or at least spare us: Or be we never so good, he may of his *Sovereign power and dominion*, and in *perfect Justice* also, hold us under affliction in this life. But according to ordinary dispensation we may expect that he will be with us as we be with him. As the working of his Spirit is in us, so the presence of his mercyes and blessings will be with us, his presence or absence will be much according as our spirits are working towards or from him, *2 Chron. 15. 2. The Lord is with you, while ye be with him: and if ye seek him, he will be found of you: but if ye forsake him, he will forsake you.* So *Psal. 18. 25, 26, 27.*

If any shall say; Then (setting aside what God in his Sovereignty may do) We hope it *will go well with us*, It is probable it will so; For there are sure these workings of the Spirit among us. In Answer hereto I shall only add that it will be needful to consider these things further.

1. *Whether these workings of the Spirit, supposed among us, may in any sense be said to be general.* That there are some few, here and there one that keep themselves close to God and have a good measure of the Spirit breathing in them, for whose sakes we fare the better, is I suppose beyond question. But whether there be a sufficient number to obtain the sparing or saving such a place of *light and means* as *New-England* is, at least without the feeling of more sorrow first, may yet be a question. For I am ready to take this for granted, that the same number

number of righteous persons that might save a *sinning Sodom*, would yet not be enough to save a *sinning Israel*. And that because of what the Lord sayes, *Am. 3. 2. You only have I known of all the Families of the Earth: therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities.*

2. *Whether those workings of the Spirit that appear among us be for the most part effectual and saving.* Whether they be not mostly or in great part common and ineffectual, and so issue only in formalities. It is the inward saving and effectual operation of the Spirit that gives us grounded hope of the expectation of sure mercyes and blessings.

3. *Whether the breathings and workings of Gods Spirit are more or less among us then when we were first set under a dispensation of Judgment.* If they be less, yea if they be not more, there is little likelihood that we should be delivered from under that Judgment. For it is not probable that that should remove anger, which was not sufficient to keep it off. If the want of such and such graces and fruits of the Spirit hath brought us under the Lords displeasure, the same defect will sure be like to continue us there. This therefore must not escape our consideration, what difference there is betwixt us then, and now. That there is more sin, and that iniquity abounds more, since Gods hand hath been out against us, I think is the general observation of all that take notice of any thing: According to that, *Zeph. 3. 7. I punished them: but they rose early and corrupted all their doings.*

4. *Whether the workings of the Spirit are now growing or decaying among us.* If there be more & more of this gracious work of the Spirit breaking forth daily, it is well: But if it grow more rare, and less and less, and the loss of good men and women, in whom the Spirit of God eminently was, is not in some good measure made up by the resting of the same Spirit upon others rising up in their stead, our case looks threatening. But I shall say no more in this matter. *Who is wise and he shall understand these things? prudent and he shall know them? For the ways of the Lord are right, and the just shall walk in them: but the transgressors shall fall therein, Hos. 14. 9.*

USE 5. Of Exhortation.

1. To all such among us as have any Interest at the throne of grace earnestly to pray that God would pour out of his Spirit upon us from on high. Let Gods favourites among us be earnest in crying unto God in this matter. If there be any strength for wrestling with God left, improve all the Interest you have with God and with his Son that you may prevail for this blessing.

For

For Motive, Consider,

Mot: 1. *It is the manner of, and is becoming to Gods people to supplicate and wait upon him for all their mercyes.* It is meet we should receive all our special blessings from God upon our knees. Thus Gods Servants have done, *Psal. 123. 1, 2. Unto thee lift I up mine eyes, O thou that dwellest in the heavens.---Our eyes wait upon the Lord our God, until that he have mercy upon us.* We must not expect to receive any signal mercy unless God say the word, and that in answer to our earnest prayers. What ever mercy God bestows on his people he will be sought to by them for it: When he hath any mercy to bestow on his people he is wont to stay till his people ask it, though it is God that puts it into their hearts to ask it. Hence we are bidden in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving to let our requests be made known unto God, *Phil. 4. 6.* We must ask the Father in Christs name for all. And therefore for this great blessing of the pouring out of the Spirit there is all reason that we should wait upon God by humble prayer. As the Apostles were commanded to wait at Jerusalem for the promise of the Father, the sending down of the Spirit, *Act. 1. 4.* and most or much of that time they spent in praying, *ver. 14. These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication.* And this no doubt was a special or main part of their prayer, that God would accomplish his promise in the actual pouring down of his Spirit.

2. *Nothing else is like to do us good, unless God will pour out his Spirit on us.* We have had experience of the inefficacy of means upon us to bring us into order and to a good frame.

Much and frequent instruction and warning by the word hath not done it. We have been taught: what people this day in the world more? It may be said of us, as *Zeph. 3. 3. The just Lord is in the midst thereof.---every morning doth he bring his Judgment to light, he saileth not,* The word of the Lord hath been to us, precept upon precept, line upon line; We have been in that respect planted in the house of the Lord: But have we not been as the fig-tree, barren Or as the Lord speaks of his Vineyard, *Isai. 5. 4. Wherefore when I looked that it should bring forth grapes, brought it forth wild grapes?*

Judgements have not done it. We have been under many: But yet may it not be said of us after all, as of them, *Am. 4. Yet have ye not returned unto me saith the Lord?* How true is it of us; *The people turneth not to him that smiteth them?* We have not received correction but refused to return.

Deliverance

Deliverances do not do it. We have been respited. And when we have seen there hath been respite, have we not been secure still? As it was said of Pharaoh, *Exod. 8. 15. But when Pharaoh saw that there was respite, he hardened his heart and hearkened not.*

Renewal of strokes hath not done it. After respite and deliverance granted God hath taken us into his hand again. But alas! that it should be too truly said of us, *We set not our hearts to this also.* So that there is little or no hope till this be, till God by his Spirit work a saving through change in our hearts. Truly we are grown so irrational as to spiritual concerns, that it is not Gods working upon us only in a rational way that will reclaim us, or bring us to his will: There must be in a more then ordinary manner the real energetical operation of his Spirit in us to make us other men and women then we are first.

3. *An universal languishing in the inner man is and will be upon us for want of this pouring out of the Spirit.* You your selves Christians by your own confession are not so capacitated to the exercise of grace & duty for want of this. Things go hard with your Souls. Those things which remain are even ready to dy. As *Rev. 3. 2.* Faith, love and other graces they are as it were under a Consumption, very feeble and languid. Iniquities prevail, corruptions get loose and waste the strength and vigour of the Soul: And will not you stir up your selves to pray for the Remedy? This is lamentable, *Isai. 64. 6, 7. We all do fade as a leaf, and our iniquities like the wind have taken us away: And there is none that calleth upon thy Name, that stirreth up himself to take hold of thee.* And how do sinners pine away in their iniquities not regarding God nor their own state and condition whilest they are without the effectual strivings of the holy Spirit with them? Will you not pity them and earnestly pray for this *healing Remedy* to be given to them? Can you see your own Souls pining, and others Souls perishing, and not be importunate with God to put forth his hand to revive and save respectively? what will become of faith, holiness, love to God, his word, Ordinances, wayes and one another, unless God be pleased to pour out his Spirit on us?

4. *The work of Christ is like quickly to ly by, unless this be.* If God do not graciously appear to give forth his holy Spirit, the work of Christ will be like ere long, and it may be not long first to fall to the ground for want of persons spirited to manage it and carry it on. And can

you be willing to see that day, or that it should come though you do not see it, and not improve the utmost of your interest with God to prevent it? Are you Christs, and not concerned that the work of Christ should, or should be in danger to, lye by? Indeed we are like to run all to confusion and misery, if God doe not wonderfully and graciously appear this way to work for us, to revive us by his Spirit, to set us into, and keep us in that order which is according to his will. There is therefore absolute necessity of the effusion of the Spirit for the continuance of Gods work and glory among us.

5. *This will be our great security against the expressions of Gods anger, Ezk. 39. 29. Neither will I hide my face any more from them: for I have poured out my Spirit upon the house of Israel, saith the Lord God. And so it will be our security in the enjoyment of all blessings and mercies. Indeed it is the only sure way we have to all, or any good. The nearer God the greatest good is to us, the farther sin the greatest evil will be from us; & there will be peace, quietness and rejoycing in the favor of God, and in the gracious effects of it.*

6. *It will be for the great honour of Christ.* By the pouring out of the Spirit is manifested the efficacy of his Redemption, and the end and fruit of it obtained, which redounds to his honour. It is a great evidence of the power of Christs Redemption and demonstrates him to be a strong Redeemer, when there is of the travel of his soul to be seen, and his people are made willing in the day of his power, & hence is he glorified. *Joh. 17. 8, 10. I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me: and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me — And I am glorified in them. And will not you pray that Christ may be honoured in his subduing the hearts of men to himself, that this crown of Glory may be set upon his head?*

7. *You have a promise to improve of Gods pouring out his Spirit.* This is that which the Lord hath spoken that he will doe, especially under the Gospel; *Isai. 44. 3. I will pour my Spirit on thy Seed and my blessing upon thine offspring. So Joel 2. 28, 29. Whence you have a bottom for faith to rest upon, an argument to plead in prayer for your children of the rising generation. You are the Lords people, and to such God in these promises gives hold to be taken of himself in this matter. Beg therefore that God would fulfil his own word, accomplish his own promise.*

Object:

Object. But it may be some will say; These promises and so the Text also respect the latter times, and Gods pouring out his Spirit upon the Jews at their conversion, and bringing home; And therefore what improvement can we make of them for our times?

Sol. If it be granted that they do respect a *signal dispensation* of God to the Jews in the *last times*, yet that hinders not but that there is many a *like dispensation* of God in accomplishing these promises under the Gospel. Prophetical Scripture is often fulfilled. And though there be in special one grand accomplishment of Scripture Prophecies and promises; yet there are also many specimens, beginnings of fulfilling them, partial accomplishments, like dispensations of Gods providence, wherein those prophecies and promises are fulfilled in their measure and degree. And so this Prophecy and promise of Gods pouring out his Spirit, however it may have its *full and complete* accomplishment in some particular glorious time hereafter; yet there hath been a *glorious* accomplishment of it already in the Apostles times, as we are informed, *Act. 2. 16, 17, 18.* But *this is that which was spoken by the Prophet Joel;* And it shall come to pass in the last days (saith God) I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh, &c. Yea, and it is fulfilled in a degree wherever the Gospel comes with power. Yea, further it is observed by some; that, 'There is no particular Church where the light hath shined but hath had its special times, some solemn day of the pouring out of the Spirit, before the Sun went down; Which may be observed either at the first breaking up of the Gospel, or at some remarkable time and change of her condition; Whence a great tack of Souls to Christ hath followed, besides the reaching of the Conscience, and stirring the affection of many others under a common work of the Spirit, which usually goeth along with solemn times. *Fulfilling of the Scripture, pag. 142. Edit. 2.* Oh therefore pray that New England may have such [or another such] a solemn day, before her Sun go down.

8. It is necessary to evidence that you have the Spirit that you be earnestly desirous to have more of the Spirit, and that both for your selves and others.

9. If Christians would in good earnest set to pray for this, there would be good hope that the Spirit would be poured out upon us. The Lord is not wont to say to his people, *seek*, or to stir them up to *seek* him in vain, *Isa. 45. 19.* I said not unto the Seed of Jacob, *seek* ye me in vain. &c. *Isa. 45. 19.*

He will be very gracious unto thee at the voice of thy cry; when he shall hear it, he will answer thee. More encouragement to instant prayer for the pouring out of the Spirit, see in Mr. *I. Mathers* Sermon on *Isai. 44. 3.* pag. 14, to 19.

By all let Christians be perswaded to *lift up* the hands which hang down, and set to prayer, with a deep *sense* of our want of the Spirit, with a *Soul humbling sense*, that we have so *grieved* the Spirit, as thus to forsake and *with-hold* its gracious operations from us: and also with *faith* and *expectation* that God will do this for us for the sake and upon the account of *Christ*: And then we might hope that it would go *well* with us, and that that should be accomplished in us which is prayed for by the Psalmist. *Psal. 90. 14, 15, 16, 17.* *O satisfy us early with thy mercy, that we may rejoice and be glad all our days. Make us glad according to the days wherein thou hast afflicted us, and the years whertin we have seen evil. Let thy work appear unto thy Servants: and thy glory unto their Children. And let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us, and establish thou the work of our hands upon us: yea, the work of our hands establish thou it.*

Exhortation 2. To *All*, to labour that the Spirit may be poured out upon them, that they may both have the Spirit, and a plentiful measure of the graces of it. Let every one endeavour to get the Spirit for himself, and so there would be a general pouring out of the Spirit. Would we be free from misery, would we be happy, make this our business. Let all unregenerate persons rouse and stir up themselves, and take the Kingdom of heaven by holy violence. Sue and strive by all means that the saving graces of the Spirit may be given to you. If we would have the Spirit poured out upon us, upon our persons, we must be in the way of waiting for it. And O that we could use utmost diligence and endeavours in this thing! It is a matter of most eminent and everlasting concernment. I might here urge those two things hinted in the Text, *The misery of being without, and the blessedness of having the Spirit poured out upon us.* which comprehend all can be said. But more particularly by way of motive, consider,

Mot. 1. *If you have not the Spirit you are none of Christs*, you have no Christ, you are Christless persons, and have no more to do with the Son of God in your present state, as to any propriety in him, then the Devils had, *Luk. 8. 28.* You may talk of Christ, and it may be profess him, but you have no right nor interest in him, *Rom. 8. 9.* Now if

If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. The Spirit is the bond of union on Christs part, and it is the Spirit which works Faith in us which is the bond of union on our part: whence Christ dwells in his people by his Spirit. Where therefore the Spirit of Christ is not, there is no union of that Soul to Christ, no faith wrought in the heart, and so no Christ dwelling in that soul. And now seriously consider what it is to be *without Christ*, to be *none of his*.

1. *It is to have no pardon of sin.* No Christ, no forgiveness. You are yet in your sins, under the guilt of them, and can have no pardon so long as you are without Christ. All the sins that ever you have committed, they stand on file against you, and you must answer for them. You lye under the heavy load of the guilt of innumerable evils, the which, if you had any sense, might make your hearts to fail at the thoughts of it. *Psal. 40. 12. For innumerable evils have compassed me about, mine iniquities have taken hold upon me, so that I am not able to look up: they are more then the hairs of my head, therefore my heart faileth me.* It is enough to make the heart of any person to fail indeed, to see the load of all his sins lying upon him unpardoned. What a dreadful thing is it for us who have been Transgressors from the womb, endless in acting of sin, to have all our sins to answer for before God, *Job. 9. 3. If he will contend with him, he cannot answer him one of a thousand.* We cannot give a *satisfying Answer* for one single sin of a thousand: But we must *answer*, that is, we must be called to an *account* for them all, if they be not pardoned, and pardoned they are not, if we have not Christ. In him pardon is to be had, *Rom. 3. 25. whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God.* But pardon is no where to be had without him.

2. *It is to have no favour with God.* No Christ, no favour in Heaven. The heart of God will never be towards any that are not in Christ, and that continue out of him. The world is at enmity with God, and reconciliation is only to be had in Christ Jesus. God will enter into friendship with, or shew favour to no person but by the means and mediation of his Son. And therefore if thou art and continuest without Christ, God does and ever will look upon thee as an Enemy, thou shalt find no favour in his eyes. *He that made thee will not have mercy on thee, he that formed thee will shew thee no favour.* There will never be other then anger in the face and heart of God towards thee.

We are all by nature children of wrath and Enemies, but they who are gotten into Christ they are thereby reconciled, *Col. 1. 21, 22. You that were sometimes alienated and Enemies in your minds by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled, in the body of his flesh through death, &c.* But for others the wrath of God abides on them, and there it will abide to Eternity, for they can have no favour, if they continue out of Christ, *Joh. 3. 36. He that believeth not the Son, the wrath of God abideth on him.*

3. *It is to have no Salvation.* No Christ, no Salvation. Whatever else men may have, if they have not Christ, they can never be saved, *Alt. 4. 12. Neither is there Salvation in any other, for there is none other Name under Heaven given among men whereby we must be saved, Joh. 3. 36. He that believeth not the Son shall not see life.* Poor creature! what dost thou dream of Heaven, happiness, eternal life & glory & hast no Christ? All thy hopes will prove to be but vain dreams, and will in the end vanish, *1 Joh. 5. 12. He that hath not the Son of God hath not life.*

4. *It is to be reprobate, i. e. disapproved, disallowed and rejected of God, Jer. 6. 30. Reprobate [or refuse and rejected] silver shall men call them, because the Lord hath rejected them, 2 Cor. 13. 5. Know you not your own selves how that Jesus Christ is in you except ye be reprobates.* They who are without Christ, though they may not be Reprobate, as the word is opposed to Elect; yet in their present state and as to what appears they are no better then those that are reprobate. And continuing under Gospel enjoyments without getting into Christ is a fearful symptom of everlasting Reprobation.

5. *It is to be Satans.* If thou art none of Christs, thou art the Devils. The possession of men in the world is divided betwixt Christ and Satan. What Christ possesses not are under Satans power and tyranny. Know therefore that if Christ hath no possession of thee, thou art possessed of the Devil. Most lamentable tydings I bring to all unconverted sinners, *you are possessed by the Devil: you are in the hands of that cruel Enemy of Souls, in the paw of that roaring Lyon who goes about seeking whom he may devour.* Is it not a dreadful thing to have the body possessed? See *Mark. 5. 2, --- 5. There met him out of the Tombs a man with an unclean Spirit. --- And alwayes night and day he was in the mountains and in the Tombs, crying and cutting himself with stones.* But how much more dreadful is it to have the Soul in the Devils possession? Ah sinner! Hast thou any reason to laugh and be merry,

merry, to enjoy one good hour, whilst thou art under the hand of so cruel a master and murderer of Souls as thou art? He hath his will upon thee, *1 Tim. 2. 26. who are taken captive by him at his will.* The evil Spirit worketh in the Children of disobedience, *Eph. 2. 2.* He trades there; In some he keeps open shop, setting forth his wares before the world in those abominations and villanies by them committed: In others he deals more underhand, he does not appear so openly, but yet he is at work in the heart of every child of disobedience. Every sinner is the Devils factor, and ere long unless thou withdraw from his service he will pay thee thy wages. Every Christless sinner is under Satans power: Hence when persons are converted, they are turned from the power of Satan, delivered from the power of darkness, *Act. 26. 18. To open their eyes and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God; Col. 1. 13. who hath delivered us from the power of darkness.*

Thus remember and consider that if you have not the Spirit of Christ you are none of Christs, and if none of Christs, then what and whose you are.

Mot. 2. *If you have not the Spirit you are worth nothing.* The true worth and value of men is according to what of the Spirit of God is in them. And therefore Pharaoh judged right of Joseph on this account that he was an eminent man, a man in whom the Spirit of God was, *Gen. 41. 38.* But if you are without this, whatever rate you may value your selves at, or others may value you, you are indeed good for nothing.

For, 1. *You know nothing of that which is only worth the knowing, and to which all other knowledge ought to be subservient.* You know nothing of the things of God and his Kingdome, of the mysteries of union and communion with God in Christ. Speculative knowledge you may have, but practical saving knowledge you have none, for the true saving knowledge of these is only attained by the help of the Spirit, which you are without, *1 Cor. 2. 11, 14. We have received the Spirit which is of God that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God --- But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.* You have little reason any one of you, he that knows most, to boast of, or be lifted up with your knowledge, for you know nothing as you ought to know. *The God of this world hath blinded the minds of them that believe not, lest the light of the glorious*

Col. 2.

Gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them, 2 Cor. 4.4. And therefore whatever you may imagine, or speak, or reason concerning spiritual things, it is but even as the blind mans imagination, discourse and reasoning concerning Colours: It is very ignorantly: You do not really understand any thing about them. *Si Christum nescis, nihil est si cetera discis.*

2. *You can do no good thing.* You have no ability to perform any good action. We are all naturally so impotent that we can do nothing that is good unless we have the Spirit to help our infirmities, *Rom. 8. 26.* *Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities:* Which you have not. We cannot take any step in a right path without the manuduction and leading of the Spirit, *Rom. 8. 14.* *For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the Sons of God, Psal. 51. 12.* *Uphold me with thy free Spirit:* But you have no such guide. All spiritual life and every action of life it comes from the Spirit of Christ, *Rom. 8. 11.* and without it nothing is to be done: And therefore let me tell you who have none of the Spirit of God, you never did any thing well in your lives, nor any thing that God will accept.

3. *You have no good in you.* All the good that is or ever was in fallen man, it is wrought by the Spirit of God. And therefore if you have none of the Spirit of God, you have no real good in you. You may have these and those good natural dispositions, and some shews of good, but as for any spiritual, saving good that will abide the trial when God shall judge what is good and what is bad, you have none of it. And therefore it may be said truly of you (whatever you may think of your good heart, &c.) your heart is little worth, *Prov. 10. 20.* *The heart of the wicked is little worth.* It is little worth indeed, for it is worth nothing. Hence is it said, *Psal. 119. 119.* *God putteth away all the wicked of the Earth like dross:* they being of no worth. Thus you see you are worth nothing, good for nothing, if you have not the Spirit of God in you: But they in whom the Spirit of God dwells, they are the excellent upon the Earth, *Psal. 16. 3.* *They are Gods Jewels, Mal. 3. 17.* *In that day when I make up my Jewels.*

Mot. 3. *If you do not get the Spirit of God to be in you, you will be like to be guilty of New-Englands ruine.* I speak now to the Generation coming on upon the Stage; if you or a considerable number of you do not take care to be right spirited for God, that you may ducly manage his work and carry it on, and serve the God of your Fathers with

a perfect heart and willing mind, you will be like to destroy and lay this pleasant land desolate, your irreligion will be an occasion thereof, *Psal. 107. 34. He turneth a fruitful land into barrenness for the wickedness of them that dwell therein.* Your sin, your degeneracy, your not owning and worshipping God in Spirit will provoke God to lay it desolate, and then it will be charged upon you, you will be reputed guilty of it, as being you who have done it, *Zech. 7. 11, -- 14: But they refused to hearken, &c. --- for they laid the pleasant land desolate.* There is the fault and there will it be charged. And what a dreadful thing will it be to have the spoiling of such a blessed work as God hath here begun, to ly at our door?

Mot. 4. *While you are without the Spirit of God you are in extreme danger.* You go in jeopardy of your lives, the lives of your Souls every hour. If this night thy Soul should be called for, what would become of thee, who hast none of the Spirit of Christ? Assuredly Christ will say of you; *I know you not, depart from me ye workers of iniquity.* And then how fearful would your condition be? *There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.* This is the danger you are in while the Spirit is not given to you. There is but a step betwixt your Souls and eternal death. Sentence of condemnation is past upon you already, *Joh. 3. 18. He that believeth not is condemned already.* Hell does as it were gape for you, your condition is extremely perilous. Did sinners know in what danger of the lives of their immortal Souls they walk in every hour they are without the Spirit of Christ, they would never sing care away with vain mirth and pastime, or please themselves with some shew and formality of Religion only. Oh the fearful amazing security of men and women that can sleep quietly and take their ease upon the brink of eternal misery!

Mot. 5. *Consider, you know not how little time you may have for the getting of the Spirit.* And therefore labour to get it quickly. It is certain you have but a short time to work in, but how short is uncertain. We have seen and see dayly how suddenly they are cut down, by the Sword, and now by this fore disease, God hath sent among us, who in probability might have lived many dayes. These especially are times wherein none can promise himself continuance of life. Thou hast this day an opportunity of hearing the word of the Gospel, and it may be mayst be something moved by it: But who knows but that some of us here may never have another? Oh that the present time

could be improved by us all to strike the stroke for Eternity ! The present time is only ours, and to know and improve that, is our wisdom and duty, 2 Cor. 6. 2. *Behold, now is the accepted time, now is the day of Salvation.* If we now improve it, it shall be a day of salvation to us, Heb. 3. 15. *While it is said, To day, if ye will hear his voice, barren not your hearts.* If we neglect making out after the Spirit to day, we know not *what shall be on the morrow, Jam. 4. 14.* None knows *what a day may bring forth, Prov. 27. 1.* Another day may bring the impenitent sinner into eternal flames. God tells us that *his Spirit shall not always strive with men, Gen. 6. 3.* And if the Spirit of God have once done striving with us, then the time and hope of our getting the Spirit is past and gone also. Now therefore while time and the day of grace lasts look about you lest the opportunity be lost and you be undone for ever.

If any shall now ask ; *How shall we do to get the Spirit of God poured out upon us and dwelling in us ?* There is a great deal of duty incumbent upon us in this respect. We must not sit still and say, It is not in our power to get the Spirit : God expects that his word should stir us up to careful endeavours, that we should up and be doing, if so the Lord will be with us. If we sit still we are sure to perish, but if we stir up and set our selves to seek him, who knows but the Lord may help us so to seek him as that he may be found of us ? Something therefore of our duty in order hereto I shall endeavour to set before you in these following Directions. And the same course is to be taken for the obtaining an encrease of the graces of the Spirit.

Direct. 1. *Labour for a serious considerate frame.* Duely to ponder and weigh things especially matters of Eternity. Seriously mind what your state, what your danger, what your work is. That is the woful bane of many a Soul they do not consider, *Isai. 1. 3. My people doth not consider.* They do not thoroughly think of things, some slight notions and workings they may have about them, but it is not to purpose. I believe there are many who think they are converted, and have the Spirit of God, who never set themselves to purpose to think what conversion was, what sin is from which they should convert ; what God, Christ and holiness is, to which they should convert, and what it is to have the Spirit of God. It is a dreadful Judgement of God upon Gospel sinners, that in seeing they see not, they have some slight sight and apprehensions of things, but they do not see them really

ally and to purpose: They know every thing almost about Christianity, but they feel nothing, and so indeed know nothing. Did men and women see things *really*, and consider things *seriously* and to purpose, we should have other manner of endeavours for the Spirit, for Conversion and Salvation then there are. It would be a good step if sinners could get their hearts set upon, and their thoughts seriously busied about, those matters that lye betwixt God and their Souls; and take up *right* and *through* apprehensions of those things which are of spiritual and everlasting concernment. Hence is it wont to be said; *Consideration is half Conversion*. A giddy slighty generation that can scarce be serious or fixed in any thing, that cannot get their hearts fixed seriously to think of things, especially of a spiritual nature, are not like to be a converted generation, to be the subject of the pouring out of the Spirit. We must therefore labour to set our hearts to the words of God, to feel them in *through meditation* that they may be our life? *“One Truth felt in Meditation is worth a world.* Mr. Mitchels *Lit.* Hence David *Psal.* 39.3. *My heart was hot within me, while I was musing the fire burned.* A religious pondering frame would greatly make way for the presence of the spirit of grace in the Soul, *Psal.* 119. 59. *I thought on my wayes and turned.*

Direct. 2. *Be sure not to resist or quench the Spirit.* When the holy Ghost is moving upon, or towards you, beware of opposing or stifling its motions; As they did, *Act.* 7. 51. *Ye Stiff necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do alwayes resist the holy Ghost.* If persons will alwayes resist the holy Ghost, when it is moving towards them, how should they come by it to be partakers of it? Hence are we so expressly charged, *1 Thes.* 5. 19. *Quench not the Spirit.* If when the Spirit moves by the word, or moves in your hearts to leave sin, to follow God and after holiness, if now you withstand, refuse or neglect to attend its motions, you are not like to obtain the Spirit. If you will not give entertainment to the Spirit of God, nor embrace its motions, how can you be like to receive it? Therefore be very attentive to embrace its motions and obey them: Harken diligently to his Counsel and Commands. *“When the Spirit of God is knocking at your hearts, and stirs your hearts to accept of him and of his graces, (which he is willing and ready to work in you) by no means neglect them or slight them, but lay hold of them presently, as one of the greatest mercyes that God is intending towards you; bless him & cherish them.*

"and beseech him to go on with his work in your souls; Do not reject any work of the Spirit, neither grieve him by neglecting his good motions: Prov. 1.23. Turn you at my Reproof: behold, I will pour out my Spirit unto you, I will make known my words unto you. Sedgwick on the Covenant. p. 641.

Direct. 3. Remove all prejudices against the Spirit out of your hearts. Our hearts naturally are full of prejudice against the Spirit and the wayes and workings of it, of which we must labour to get them cleared. There are those things wont to be mentioned (*as in the Author but now quoted, p. 639*) wherein we are apt to take up prejudice against the Spirit. 1. Against the humbling work of the Spirit. 2. The mortifying work of the Spirit. 3. The sanctifying work of the Spirit. 4. The Derisions that befall men for the Spirits sake. That which I have especial reference to here is that we should get removed all prejudice against the mortifying and sanctifying work of the Spirit. Beware of being offended at the way of walking in the Spirit for the strictness of it, as if it were too strait to be restrained from these and those flesh-pleasing actions, and to be tyed to these and those religious duties and services. Be so far from looking upon these as unreasonable, as that on the contrary you may account them most equitable, and indeed most pleasant: *As Prov. 8.17. Her wayes are wayes of pleasantness.* And account that it is your naughty heart only that makes you think them tedious and irksome: By all means get your hearts reconciled to those wayes, in which the Spirit of God leads those he dwells in, that you may from the heart account those happy who by the help and grace of the Spirit can and do walk in them, and that you should account it your own greatest happiness if you could obtain so have and walk in the Spirit, and in all the wayes thereof, and that every way and work of the Spirit of God may be very precious & desirable to you. They are the most excellent, glorious, profitable and desirable wayes and works, and it is the perverseness of mans heart and will that makes them at any time seem otherwise: which perverse esteem of them we must labour to get rid of.

Dir. 4. Get your hearts pressed with the intollerable load and burthen of sin, of which you can no way be eased but by the presence and help of the Spirit of God. Never rest nor be quiet till you come to see the intollerable, infinite, endless evil that is in sin, to be sensible that it is an unsupportable burthen. That is the reason why many are so little concerned

cerned about obtaining the Spirit of God to help and relieve them; they are not duely sensible of the dreadful burthen and load of their sin that lyes upon them. They have some lighter convictions and humiliations it may be for some grosser sins, but they are not deep, soaking, nor through enough: They are not sick unto death of their sin, and hence they do not look for, or not very earnestly for the Physician. It may be they have some physick of their own, something compounded in their own Kitchen, some course or work of their own, that they account will do the deed, expiate for their sin, and preserve them from perishing; and so they look no further. Or if they do look out to this great Physician of Souls, it is only to get some directions what they may do themselves for themselves, and they themselves will get it, work it and administer it, and so they rest still upon their own doing: They are not brought so low in themselves, as utterly and for ever to despair of their own strength and skill to recover themselves, and hence they do not yield themselves wholly and fully to be healed by the Spirit of Christ; they do not see such need of it. Labour therefore by all means to see clearly the deadly wound that sin hath given you, and to have your hearts broken all to pieces under the sense thereof. So long as you are whole in your self, or think you can make your self whole, you will see no need of the Physician: But if you be thus sick, heart-sick of sin, you will then feel an absolute need of the Physician, you will then prize and look after him, *Math. 9. 12. They that be whole need not a Physician, but they that are sick.* Sit not down at quiet till sin become most exceeding bitter. *"Go on humbling so be humbled, and so see such intollerable evil in sin, and so be so burdened with the wrath of God lying upon you for it, as it may make sin everlastingly odious to you, & force you to fly for refuge, so lay hold on the hope set before you, and so have strong consolation there.* *Mr. Mitchel Let.* Do not shun sorrow and mourning for sin: Of necessity you must be troubled for sin in this life or in Hell, and it is far better to come mourning to God for sin here, then to go mourning from him for his Judgement hereafter. If we be indeed cast down for sin & be in extream bitterness of Soul about it from the sinfulness of it, and its contrariety to God appearing to us, then we shall be fit objects for the Spirit who is the comforter to manifest his gracious work upon, *Isai. 57. 18. I will lead him also and restore comforts unto him and to his mourners.* Penitential mourners for sin stand fair in the way to be comforted by God. Thus it is said

said the Spirit of the Lord was upon Christ for this end, *Ijai. 61. 1, 2, 3. The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek, he hath sent me to bind up the broken hearted, to proclaim liberty to the Captives. and the opening of the prison to them that are bound: To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God, to comfort all that mourn: To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning.* If we do not feel sin to purpose (as it is to be feared few in these dayes do, whatever common convictions many have) there is little hope that we should have this blessed Comforter sent to us, to take up his abode with us. Mourning for sin cannot be too much, if it raise the price of Christ in the Soul, and draw out a more earnest desire of the applying work of the Spirit to be wrought in the heart.

Direct. 3. Cry mightily to God for his Spirit. Ask this boon of Heaven. When you feel an utter want of the Spirit of God in you, then run, flee to the throne of grace and let your Soul cry out to the living God for this mercy. Tell the Lord in humble manner what need you have of his Spirit, what your misery is without it, and earnestly beg of him that he will give you his holy Spirit, to work faith, repentance and all other graces in you. And for your encouragement consider what Christ sayes, *Luk. 11. 13. If ye then being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your Children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the holy Spirit to them that ask him?* and *Prov. 2. 3, 4, 5. But you will say; we cannot pray without the Spirit.*

Ans. But yet go and present your selves before God, and spread your case before him as well as you can. Bemoan your wants, your inability to good, your insensibleness of your misery: Plead as well as you can for mercy, for the bestowing of his Spirit upon you: Who knows but when you are endeavouring, seeking and striving, God may give in his holy Spirit to you, and help you to pray to acceptance with him? It is our duty to wait & let God take his time & way to work. But be sure to pray & that with great earnestness from a deep sense of your distress and danger, that God will speedily help you, Psal. 70. 1. Make haste, O God, to deliver me, make haste to help me, O Lord, Psal. 143. 7. Hear me speedily, O Lord, my Spirit faileth: hide not thy face from me, lest I be like unto them that go down into the pit, It must be with humble and earnest prayer on our part, that the Spirit of God will come into our Souls, if ever it come there, Look therefore to the
Infinite

Infinite mercy of God in Christ to help in this matter.

Direct. 6. *Be exceeding diligent in the use of all means, especially in attending upon the word of God for the obtaining of the Spirit.* As we must pray, so we must use all due means with praying over them. Seek for the Spirit wherever there is hope it may be found in all those *ways* which God hath instituted for the giving forth of grace, mercy and good to the Souls of men. Let *Sabbaths* be observed, *Ordinances* attended, *meditation, self examination, prayer, secret, Family and publick prayer, reading the word of God*; And especially the *Ministry* of the word: Oh wait there; By that, the word of God *dispensed*, the Spirit is pleased to convey himself. The *Gospel* is called the *ministration of the Spirit*, 2 Cor. 3. 8. We read of those upon whom the holy Ghost fell while they were hearing the word, *Act. 10. 44. While Peter yet spake these words, the holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word.* The *Galatians Gal. 3. 2.* received the Spirit by the *hearing of faith*, i.e. the word of faith which the Apostles preached. Therefore attend diligently to the *Ministry* of the word, pray before you come, pray when you go from hearing of the word, that it might be a blessed means to convey the Spirit to you: And when you come to the word attend with all your might, hear as for your lives, do not heedlessly let slip any one Sentence without your careful attention. Expect, wait, long, look when, by what sentence, by what word spoken God will let in his Spirit into your Souls. Oh if persons would set themselves in good earnest to attend upon the word of the Gospel, as the word of God, as the Ministry of the Spirit, who knows what God might do for them? Let the word of God be precious, if ever you would have the Spirit of God with you and in you.

Dir. 7. *Enquire seriously and consult with those that have the Spirit of God.* If you have any serious christian friend you can open your heart to, be plain with him, & beseech him to be plain with you. Enquire the way of the Spirit from those who have had experience thereof, *Jer. 50. 4. 5. In those dayes and in that time saith the Lord, the children of Israel shall come, they and the children of Judah together going and weeping: they shall go and seek the Lord their God: They shall ask the way: o Zion with their faces thitherward.* Where you meet with difficulty in the way seek for instruction: Listen what others, what Christians of approved godliness and experience say concerning the way of the Spirit of God in their Souls, if so be that you thereby might go forth by the footsteps of

of Christs flock, and find him whom your Soul seeks after. This is the direction the Lord gives to her, *Cant. 1. 8. If thou know not, -- go thy way forth by the footsteps of the flock.* It is of exceeding use for persons whose desires are intently set after the Spirit of God to be opening their hearts, and conferring seriously one with another about the same. On the holy breathings of the Spirit that have many times been hindred in the Souls of persons when they have been seriously and sincerely conferring concerning the things and wayes of the Spirit of God?

Direct. 8. Continue seeking, striving and waiting in the use of all means till you find, till the Spirit be poured out from on high upon you. If the Lord do not come and give his Spirit to you presently, yet take heed of giving over, or slackning your endeavours. Many being some way or other roused, for a fit are very earnest, but not finding the Spirit of God to come quickly, they give over, they are soon cooled, and content themselves with their former formalities in the exercises of Religion. Take heed we do not cast away our Souls here: How many, many perish here! Resolve never to give over seeking and waiting till God be gracious to you, and pour out his Spirit upon you. If God give you not the holy Spirit to be your Comforter, resolve never to take comfort, but ly down in sorrow. Let nothing divert you from this seeking, let nothing satisfy you till you have found the thing you seek for, *Hos. 6. 3. Then shall we know if we follow on to know the Lord.* Importunity and constancy may at last prevail, *Luk. 11. 5. -- 10. -- Yet because of his importunity, he will rise and give him as many as he needeth, &c. and Luk. 18. 1. And he spake a parable unto them to this end that men ought alwayes to pray and not to faint.* The Lord Jesus spake these things to encourage to importunity and constancy in prayer. And for the prevalency and good effect of this we have the famous example of the woman of Canaan, *Mat. 15. 22. -- 28.*

Direct. 9. Make this the business of your lives. Look upon it as the main thing you came into the world for. Lay out the strength of your Souls about it. Drive on this as if you had nothing else to mind or do: Make this your work to get the Spirit of God to be in you, and all other things subordinate and subservient to this. Do not think that for a sinner to obtain all the gracious operations of the Spirit in himself, to get a due sense of sin as most odious and loathsome, and to rest his Soul upon Christ as most precious, and to shew forth all the blessed fruits of the Spirit in his conversation, is a work easly or quickly done: And yet you must not rest till you come to this, till there be the apparent, manifest, full breathings and operations of the Spirit in you. As Mercy is not like to come to us till the Spirit be poured out upon us from on high: So let us wait and labour till the Spirit be poured out upon us, singly and generally, that the wilderness may become a fruitful field, and the fruitful field be counted for a Forrest, and so those mercyes and blessings which are consequent to this may be derived down to, and settled upon us. For a close, let every sincere one, whose heart is upon the work and glory of Christ, heartily and earnestly joyn with the Psalmist in that prayer & profession of his, *Psal. 53. 6. 7 that the Salvation of Israel were come out of Zion! when God bringeth back the Captivity of his people, Jacob shall rejoyce, and Israel shall be glad.*

